

North tells jury he lied

WASHINGTON (R) — Oliver North testified Friday that he lied to Congress and shredded government documents to cover up his role in the Iran-contra affair. North told a federal jury that he lied about his role in getting aid to the Nicaraguan contra rebels at an August 1986 meeting with members of the House of Representatives intelligence committee. The first White House aide also said he shredded top-secret documents at the Reagan administration National Security Council (NSC), after his former NSC boss Robert McFarlane told him to do so. "Did you tell the truth at that meeting on Aug. 6, 1986?" defence lawyer Brendan Sullivan asked North during his second day of testimony at his Iran-contra trial. "No," said North. "I... went into the meeting not believing it would be illegal not to tell Congress the truth, and that's why I didn't think the meeting would be a good idea." The session with the House of Representatives intelligence committee was in the White House situation room. The former White House aide said then-National Security Adviser John Poindexter told him: "You go to the meeting with them, it's informal." North said: "I felt like a pawn in a chess game being played by giants." (Early story on page 8)

Jordan Times

An independent political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز لوجستية سياسية تصدر عن المؤسسة الأردنية للرأي

U.N. to beef up Namibia force

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — U.N. officials said Friday the size of a peacekeeping force in Namibia would double over the weekend in an effort to stop fighting in the embattled Southwest African territory. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, meanwhile, prepared to brief the Security Council on the latest developments in Namibia, where South African-led security forces and black nationalist fighters have fought the past week. "The secretary-general is actively pursuing the restoration of the ceasefire" that broke down April 1, the first day of the Namibian independence plan, U.N. spokesman Francois Gualiani said. At least 261 fighters of the South-West Africa People's Organisation and 28 South African-led security force members have been killed in the seven days of fighting, according to Namibian police (see page 8). The world body has been severely criticised by black African nations and the Non-Aligned Movement for having only about 900 troops in Namibia so far, not enough to head off clashes between SWAPO and the security forces. The U.N. Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) was sent to Namibia to monitor a one-year plan to organise an independent black majority-ruled government, ending 74 years of South African rule.

Volume 14 Number 4056

AMMAN SATURDAY, APRIL 8, 1989, RAMADAN 2, 1409

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Syria 1 pound; Lebanon 1 pound; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams; Great Britain 25 pence

Al Hussein attends prayers, receives Ramadan greeting

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein attended Friday prayers at the King Abdullah Ibn Al Hussein Mosque at Abdali and listened to sermons delivered by Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Minister Sheikh Abdul Aziz Al Khayyat, who congratulated the King and the Arab and Muslim nations on the occasion of the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan.

The minister outlined the benefits of fasting and said it was aimed at enabling Muslims to endure difficulties and be patient. Khayyat praised King Hussein's relentless efforts to rally Arabs and to unite their ranks.

Attending the prayers were Prime Minister Zaid Rifai, Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi, Royal Court Chief Field Marshal Sharif Zaid Ibn Shaker, King Hussein's special advisor Amer Khammash, Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ibn

Zaid, Cabinet ministers, Chief Islamic Justice Sheikh Mohammad Muheilan and senior government officials.

Ramadan congratulations

King Hussein Friday received congratulatory cables from Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and Arab League Secretary General Chadli Klibi on the occasion of the beginning of Ramadan.

On Thursday, the King received telephone calls from Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. Both leaders conveyed Ramadan congratulations to the King and exchanged views with him on issues of concern to the Arab World.

King Hussein also called King Fahd Ibn Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia and North Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh and exchanged congratulations and views with them.



His Majesty King Hussein, along with Prime Minister Zaid Rifai, Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi and other senior officials, attends Friday prayers at the King Abdullah Ibn Al Hussein Mosque in Amman (Petra photo)

Meetings planned

on current Arab developments.

A statement from the Royal Court said Friday King Hussein also received cables of good wishes from heads of state of Arab and Islamic countries on the occasion of Ramadan.

In Cairo, President Mubarak announced that he would meet with King Hussein and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat in the course of ongoing consultations among the three leaders and prior to the King's April 19 visit to the United States.

Mubarak, who returned to Cairo from a visit to the United States Thursday, described his talks with President George Bush as highly fruitful.

Protesters battle troops at Al Aqsa; at least 12 injured

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli police firing tear-gas and rubber bullets battled stone-throwing Palestinians Friday at the Haram Al Sharif complex, one of Islam's holiest shrines.

At least 12 people were injured in the fighting erupted at Al Aqsa Mosque after a policeman on a rooftop observation point fired rubber bullets at a group of Palestinian protesters burning Israeli flags and stoning police.

As the gunshots echoed across the walled courtyard, hundreds of angry Palestinians pelted the police post with stones, sending policemen and journalists running for cover, witnesses said.

Five policemen and Austrian television cameraman Wolfgang Scheidl, 47, were injured by stones. The cameras of other photographers were smashed in the barrage.

Police responded by firing dozens of rounds of tear-gas and injured three protesters with rubber bullets, hospital staff said.

Three Israelis were hit on the head by rocks flying over the ramparts from the shrine. Worshippers and tourists fled in panic, from the stones and spreading clouds of tear-gas, witnesses said.

Police said some of the 37 protesters arrested were from the distant Gaza Strip and the protest seemed to have been planned by the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas).

The movement's leaflets had been passed among the 25,000 worshippers who packed Al Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock for prayers on the first Friday of Ramadan.

The fighting, which lasted about 45 minutes, was the most serious violence at the sensitive holy place for more than a year.

Residents of the walled Old City said many children and old people were overcome by tear-gas fumes.

In the occupied West Bank, troops opened fire on Palestinian demonstrators outside Hebron's Ibrahimiyah Mosque, wounding three with live ammunition and one with rubber bullets, staff at the town's Alia Hospital said.

Palestinian sources said Jewish settlers stoned Arab vehicles in the town and Palestinians hurled stones in response. Soldiers had now clamped a curfew on the old town, they said.

Palestinian sources also reported clashes between Palestinians and troops in Nablus, the West Bank's largest city, and Askar and Fawwar refugee camps.

In the occupied Gaza Strip, the army closed two schools run by the United Nations after pupils clashed with troops, staff said.

Israeli lawyer Felicia Langer, who specialises in defending Palestinians, accused police pathologists of manipulating local media by selectively leaking a report on two Palestinians who died in Israeli prisons.

Israel Radio said Scottish pathologist Dr. Derek Pounder had concluded that Mahmoud Al Masri, found dead in the interrogation wing of a Gaza hospital last month, died of a perforated ulcer and Ibrahim Matur hanged himself in Hebron jail last year.

Families of the dead men invited Pounder to the occupied territories as part of their campaign to prove the prisoners died after mistreatment by secret service interrogators.

Langer told Reuters that Pounder's examinations so far confirmed that Masri died of a perforated ulcer but it was possible that the ailment was brought on by beating.

"Even the official report showed he had been beaten all over his body... we don't yet know if it was perhaps the blows that burst the ulcer or if he received proper treatment afterwards," she said.

Langer also said there were many questions regarding Matur's death.

On Thursday, Israeli troops shot and wounded at least 16 Palestinians.

Also Thursday, Salem Ismail Salah, 27, of the West Bank village of Deir Salah near Bethlehem, died of head wounds.

Bush pledges help to find peace

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — U.S. President George Bush pledged U.S. help towards a Middle East peace settlement Friday and described the situation in the troubled region as marginally improved.

Referring to a plan by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to hold elections among Palestinians in the occupied territories, the president said: "In the Middle East a little step sometimes can be fruitful. I think the climate is better than it has been."

But in response to a question in the White House press room, Bush suggested it was too early to consider a trip by him to the region to try to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"If I personally can be helpful I am going to do it," Bush said. But, he added, "it is not a time when a lot of high visibility missions on the part of the president can be helpful in the process."

Shamir presented the proposal Thursday to Bush. At a news conference, he ruled out international inspectors for the balloting. Still, Secretary of State James Baker said he was encouraged about Middle East prospects.

"I think the important thing is that his proposal comes with something that can be worked with," Baker said Thursday. "It offers us an opportunity to perhaps move the peace process forward. And I think that's encouraging."



George Bush

On Friday, Bush also urged Israel to trade more occupied territory for peace and said it was up to both sides to decide whether the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) should play a role in solving the conflict.

Reporters asked Bush if he was nudging Shamir in a speech Thursday when he called on Israel to end its "sovereignty" and occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"What I was signalling is that the territory that has been ceded for peace is not the end. It simply isn't," he said.

Asked about the PLO's role, Bush said: "I think the answer is to get on with the elections and we haven't fully resolved who exactly is going to have a role. But I think that is a matter to be determined between the parties."

"The PLO has people living on the West Bank as you know, and we want to see elections that are free and fair there."

Bush gave his qualified endorsement of the principle of holding elections after discussing the idea with Shamir at the White House. At the same time, the president emphasised that Israel eventually must relinquish the land it occupied in the 1967 war.

PLO scoffs at Shamir's 'new' elections proposal

BRAZZAVILLE, Congo (AP) — Palestine President and PLO Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat Friday rejected an Israeli proposal that has U.S. support for elections in the occupied territories, calling it "inappropriate, as usual."

On the second day of a two-day trip to Congo, Arafat said Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak "Shamir's statement in Washington is inappropriate, as usual. ... All oppressors in the world have used the same language."

Shamir proposed that Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip choose representatives to talk to Israel about establishing "autonomy" as a holding measure, leaving discussion on the ultimate fate of the region until later.

Arafat reiterated the Arab call for an international peace conference on the Middle East, with the participation of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council and all concerned parties, including the PLO.

"Until the ultimate victory, the

uprising of the populations of the Gaza and West Bank will continue through the intifada, the symbolic stone with which the Palestinian David will slay the giant Israeli Goliath," Arafat said.

Several other senior PLO officials also rejected the proposal by Shamir for elections in the occupied territories, saying it contained nothing new.

"The formula which Shamir has brought is the old shabby cloth of Camp David which he is trying to market as the latest fashion of Yves Saint Laurent," said Yasser Abd Rabbo, referring to the Egyptian-Israeli peace accords of 1978.

Rabbo, a member of the PLO's executive committee, described the election idea as "the code word of Shamir for the continuation of the occupation."

"He is trying to draw attention away from the main problem — the right of self-determination for the Palestinian people," Rabbo added.

Salah Khalaf, number two in the main PLO group Fatah, de-

scribed Shamir's plan as a "great deception".

"We are ready to accept elections if the Israeli army withdraws from the occupied territories and is replaced with international supervision. We are confident that all the Palestinian people support the PLO," he said.

Khalaf described Shamir's proposal as a manoeuvre designed to kill the 16-month uprising in the occupied territories and said the Israeli premier's hope of reviving Camp David was useless.

"Even Egypt says that Camp David is now dead. So what Camp David is he trying to revive? If we wanted to be part of Camp David we would have accepted it 10 years ago," he said.

Both Rabbo and Khalaf expressed disappointment at Bush's qualified support for Shamir's proposal.

Israel meanwhile urged the United States, the Soviet Union and Europe Friday to pressure the PLO into allowing elections in the occupied territories, but Jewish settlers expressed fierce opposition to the proposal.

Warsaw turns to reforms

WARSAW (Agencies) — The Polish parliament Friday approved a package of laws introducing radical political reforms and opening the way for quick legalisation of the Solidarity trade union.

The six laws embodied constitutional and political changes agreed by the communist government and the Solidarity-led opposition in talks that ended two days ago.

The 460-member Sejm overwhelmingly approved the laws after a brief debate. The government rushed to tie up an historic deal with the opposition in the hope of extricating Poland from stagnation and crisis.

According to a final document signed at the talks, the

changes put Poland on "the beginning of the road to parliamentary democracy."

None of the laws received less than 304 votes. The maximum number of dissenting votes and abstentions was 14 and 71 — on a law liberalising the right to form associations and political clubs.

An amended trade union law restoring union pluralism and enabling Solidarity to apply for legal registration after a seven-year ban was approved 339-4 with 43 abstentions.

In a surprise move, typifying the reform spirit, independent deputy Ryszard Bender proposed that the Sejm change the state's name from the "The Polish People's Republic" to the simpler pre-World War II

version, "The Republic of Poland."

"If we don't pass this change today, the next Sejm... will," Bender said. "The nation will not agree any longer with the strange-sounding name of the state imposed during the period of Bierut-Stalinist distortions."

He was referring to the now-discredited Boleslaw Bierut, the loyal Stalinist who led Poland from 1947 until his death in 1956.

After a recess in which Bender consulted with parliament leaders, he agreed to withdraw his motion and let it be referred to a special commission that would consider further changes in the Polish constitution.

India tables 'destabilisation' plot

NEW DELHI (R) — Four Sikhs were charged in court Friday with using Pakistani aid to mastermind a plot to overthrow the Indian government and create communal unrest.

The plot included the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, according to a list of charges filed against the four in a Delhi court by the government of her son, Rajiv Gandhi.

The four — Simranjit Singh Mann, Attinder Pal Singh, Dalip Singh and Jagmohan Singh Tony — were accused of sedition and waging war against the nation in a case that is expected to become a key issue in general elections.

The plots are due by the end of the year.

Mann, a former police officer, hatched the conspiracy in July, 1984, and sought the assistance of unnamed foreign agencies in pur-

suit of his aims, the government charge-sheet said.

Mann, Attinder Pal and Tony had written a letter to Pakistani President Mohammad Zia Ul Haq seeking his country's intervention in Punjab, the charge-sheet said. Zia died in a plane crash last August.

Attinder Pal is believed to have planned the hijacking of an Indian airliner shortly before Mrs. Gandhi was shot dead by two Sikh bodyguards in October, 1984. He was also involved in bomb blasts in Delhi last year.

He crossed into Pakistan after Mrs. Gandhi's murder and was given a free hand in persuading Sikh youths already there to "take up arms against the government of India and create anarchy," the charge-sheet added.

In January, the government hanged Sarwant Singh and Kehar

Singh for their involvement in the murder.

Tony and Dilip Singh are both lecturers in Bombay colleges, while a fifth accused, Rattan Singh, died before the charges were finalised, a government spokesman said.

The charges were filed by a special investigating team, which helped Justice Manharlal Thakkar probe charges of a conspiracy behind the murder of Indira Gandhi.

The Thakkar commission report was made public last month after the opposition accused the government of hiding the truth behind her key aide, Rajinder Kumar Dhawan.

Dhawan, named by Thakkar as a possible suspect in the conspiracy, joined Rajiv Gandhi's staff two months ago.



Little Beirut children injured in the latest spasm of violence wait their turn at a hospital quite oblivious to their mothers' anguish

Uneasy Beirut truce wobbles, but holds

BEIRUT (Agencies) — The people of Beirut sandbagged battle-scarred homes Friday, fearful that a shaky truce had brought only a brief respite from savage urban war.

All sides predicted that Wednesday night's truce, which broke down Thursday, would not hold. Frantic residents used the lull to put out fires and shore up bomb shelters.

There were reports of gunners firing Howitzer shells into Lebanon's Christian enclave Friday, violating the ceasefire.

A police spokesman said eight Soviet-designed 130-millimetre shells slammed into sandy beaches near the port of Jounieh north of Beirut at 3:30 a.m. (0130 GMT).

The spokesman, who cannot be named in line with standing rules, said three other shells exploded near the suburb of Hadeth of Beirut's southeastern edge at 2:55 p.m. (1255 GMT).

He said the situation was one of "no total war and no total peace, until further notice."

"We are buying more sandbags to protect our babies from this crazy shelling," one Beirut said. Sandbags were selling for 150 Lebanese pounds (about 30 U.S. cents).

Nearly 159 people have been killed, over 560 wounded and tens of thousands have fled since Beirut was subjected to a 24-day cross-city artillery war, one of the most horrific chapters in 14 years of civil strife.

The truce call came from Arab League mediators, seeking ways to end a constitutional crisis which has left Lebanon without a head of state and with a divided government and army.

Political sources said the ceasefire would only hold if army chief Michel Aoun lifted his blockade of militia ports and revived a truce committee which used to serve as a point of contact.

Aoun, in an interview in the French daily Le Figaro, dismissed the truce as a Syrian bluff and said his forces would use any means to fight Syria's military presence in Lebanon.

Aoun, trained in a French military academy, said he hoped for military aid from Paris.

Aoun who heads the military cabinet in Lebanon's dual government has demanded the withdrawal of Syrian troops.

He also has urged all Lebanese factions to meet in Lebanon and discuss a settlement to the 14-year-old civil war.

Nabih Berri, who heads the

mainstream Shi'ite Amal militia, rejected Aoun's offer and urged the Syrians to maintain their troops in Lebanon.

"The Syrian forces in Lebanon are a guarantee for the nationalist factions against attacks by Israel and its allies," Berri told reporters.

"The problem is in the Maronite-dominated political system which we reject. Even if the Syrians withdrew, we will not have an agreement with Aoun," added Berri.

Parliament Speaker Hussein Hussein told a news conference Friday he would be willing to form a committee of Muslim and Christian parliamentary deputies to draw up constitutional reforms.

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U.N. running out of food for Afghan needy

KABUL (R) — An operation to feed the needy in war-ravaged Afghanistan, where most people live on the breadline, is fast running out of food, U.N. officials said Friday.

Diplomats blamed delays in rushing food to Kabul mostly on the rival attitudes of the superpowers towards the pro-Soviet Afghan government.

Leon de Riedmatten, head of Operation Salam, the U.N. project responsible for distributing food in Afghanistan, told Reuters in an interview the aid would last only until the end of April.

"There is not enough food in stock belonging to the United Nations. With present stocks we can continue helping the needy until the end of April," he said.

The United Nations has distributed on average five tonnes of flour and 1.5 tonnes of sugar per day in Kabul since the beginning of March, providing food for 12,000 of the poorest families in the capital.

"We cannot feed everybody. There are hundreds of thousands of families which need help," he said.

Ten years of war have wrought havoc on Afghanistan, where Mujahideen rebels are battling to topple the government of President Najibullah. Large areas of the country are either ruined or held by the rebels, making it impossible to farm or raise livestock.

The result is large-scale poverty with most families feeding only

on bread and onions, Afghanistan's traditional staples.

Two thirds of all the children are malnourished and infant mortality is the highest in the world.

De Riedmatten said almost all the food distributed so far had come from the Soviet Union, which has supplied the U.N. office with 360 tonnes of flour, wheat and sugar.

The only Western contribution came when an Ethiopian airliner flew in 26 tonnes of relief supplies on Feb. 26.

The airlift came to a swift end with airline companies citing security risks in flying into a city regularly blasted by rebel rockets.

However, Kabul Airport is still open and Soviet aircraft roar in non-stop with food and military supplies for the beleaguered government.

Diplomats blamed the halt in Western supplies of aid on political considerations, saying Washington and its Western allies believe that sending supplies would be tantamount to propping up the government.

All Western nations closed their embassies in Kabul after the last Soviet troops left Afghanistan on Feb. 15, fearing inadequate security for their envoys.

Kabul denounced the decision

as a political ploy to undermine the government. The Western embassies are under guard and sheep and cows graze around the compounds.

The diplomats also say a huge stock of food on the Soviet border is not being released to the United Nations because Moscow is reluctant to let Operation Salam control its distribution.

There are at least 154,000 tonnes of essential supplies on the Soviet-Afghan border by the Amu-Darya River awaiting transfer to Kabul, the diplomats say.

Guerrilla ambushes and bad weather often make it impossible to ship the supplies on the Salang Highway, Kabul's lifeline from the Soviet Union.

The world has promised Afghanistan almost \$900 million in food aid and reconstruction projects, with Moscow committed to providing two-thirds of that figure.

Blast in Kabul

Meanwhile soldiers said Friday sabotage was to blame for an explosion in Kabul Thursday that destroyed 12 fuel trucks.

The fuel trucks had just arrived in Kabul along the Salang Highway from the Soviet Union when the blast ripped through the depot sending a huge column of smoke over the city.

Officials said Thursday the depot was hit by a rocket fired from Mujahideen rebel positions.

Kabul denounced the decision

Yet another victim of Israeli atrocities

BETHLEHEM, occupied West Bank (AP) — As Israeli soldiers chased demonstrators Thursday, a 17-year-old Palestinian youth in blue jeans and white sneakers. The youth fell, blood coming from his head.

The victim, 17-year-old Dahoud Khaled Nassar of Bethlehem, later was reported to be unconscious and in critical condition with two bullet wounds to the head, according to doctors at Makassed Hospital in Jerusalem.

There are scenes of violence almost daily in the 16-month-old Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Both Palestinians and Israelis have suffered.

This time, the soldiers opened fire in front of reporters and photographers. The use of live ammunition against a fleeing person also seemed to conflict with army regulations.

The incident began when four soldiers in a jeep rounded a corner into the demonstration and opened fire with rifles when they were met with a barrage of several dozen rocks and bottles. A captain in dark glasses fired from the driver's seat.

Israeli and foreign photographers and a young Arab boy wheeling a bicycle — who was not part of the protest — dived for cover.

Then the soldiers, still firing, began chasing the fleeing demonstrators through the surrounding streets. Three of the troops headed down a road to the west. The lieutenant ran after Nassar on a street to the east.

Unlike most of the others fleeing, Nassar had no scarf covering his face. He wore a green sweater along with the jeans and sneakers.

After rounding the corner from the square, the lieutenant knelt with one knee on the dusty pavement, aimed stones from a roadblock placed by the protesters. He aimed. Two shots could be heard.

About 40 metres away, Nassar was knocked to the ground. Blood flowed from behind his right ear.

"They've got a casualty," the lieutenant shouted.

"The lieutenant, who appeared to be in his late 30s, chased away a reporter and a television crew who moved toward the stricken youth. He then joined another officer shooting at youths running down another narrow street in Bethlehem's Makassed Quarter.

Residents along the street picked up Nassar's

limp body and drove it to nearby Beit Jala Hospital. Doctors ordered him transferred to Jerusalem's better-equipped Makassed, about 10 kilometres away.

Doctors said Nassar was hit with two live rounds. None of the soldiers was reported injured in the barrage of rocks and bottles.

An army spokeswoman confirmed that one youth was wounded in a violent confrontation with soldiers.

"An initial investigation in the field shows that no live ammunition was fired. We are continuing to investigate," she said on condition of anonymity in keeping with the army regulations.

An official in the army spokesman's office, who agreed to discuss army regulations on firing at demonstrators on condition of anonymity, said "soldiers can only use live ammunition when their lives are in danger."

He said soldiers can fire plastic bullets to disperse a violent demonstration, even if their lives are not endangered. But he said a soldier is only allowed to fire a plastic bullet at a fleeing suspect who has committed a serious offence, such as a stabbing.

"A soldier can't fire at someone running away if the guy has thrown a rock," the official said. The demonstration, like many others before it, started in the commercial district, where shops, restaurants and hotels used to be crowded with pilgrims visiting this Biblical city where Jesus was born.

About 100 people, men and women, gathered in a small square. They set up roadblocks of rocks and burning tyres at three points to block off the area. Many covered their faces with checkered keffiyeh headscarves or scarves in the red, green, black and white colours of the Palestinian flag.

They carried a flag, too, and chanted "Allah Akbar (God is Great). Long live the flag. They also shouted "popular revolution against the Zionists."

Some of the leaders of the chants seemed to be reading them off pieces of crumpled paper. As they shouted, women in the crowd gathered rocks from the street, putting them in buckets at street corners in expectation that soldiers might come.

The four soldiers in the jeep appeared after the crowd had been marching and chanting for about a half-hour.

As is usually the case, the crowd of masked protesters smashed rocks and empty bottles at the soldiers. Some used slingshots to fire stones at the soldiers.

Montazeri calls on followers to stop riots against Khomeini

By Neil MacFarquhar
The Associated Press

NICOSIA, Cyprus — The official Islamic Republic News Agency said Friday that Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri wrote to the population of his hometown asking them to stop the reportedly violent riots that followed his firing as Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's designated successor.

IRNA reported the letter in a dispatch from the Friday prayer sermon in which Chief Justice Ayatollah Musavi Ardebili denied that Montazeri's ouster signalled that the government was in the throes of a power struggle.

The Baghdad-based Mojahideen Khatol, the main Iranian opposition group, said Friday that a number of people died among the civilians and the soldiers called into Najafabad to quell the riots.

The report, also received by the Jordan Times, said that the city of 154,000 people, 34 kilometres west of Isfahan, was under curfew and check points were monitoring traffic.

IRNA said Montazeri wrote to his home city of Najafabad "to thwart any action against the Islamic Republic that might be taken in his name."

Ardebili said at Friday mass prayers in Tehran that he was delighted with Montazeri's letter, IRNA reported.

"He wrote it for those who wanted to muddy the waters..." IRNA quoted Ardebili as saying.

Montazeri, who in recent weeks openly criticised the shortcomings of the Islamic revolution and called for greater freedom, stepped down March 28 after Khomeini wrote and told him to resign.

Khomeini's decision to dump the 64-year-old cleric is part of a crack-down on moderates within the top Iranian leadership.

Lebanon's hospitals defy shelling to save lives

By Michael Kuli
Reuters

BEIRUT — "Save the babies, save the babies," screamed the head nurse as shells hurt near her hospital in east Beirut.

Nurses dashed for the children's ward on the third floor, scooped up 40 infants and dived for the shelter.

Minutes later three shells slammed into the hospital turning the ward to rubble.

Lebanon's hospitals, often hit during the savage bombardment of the past three weeks, struggle against the odds to save growing numbers of victims of this latest round in the country's 14-year-old civil war.

At least 153 people were killed and over 500 wounded since March 14 when military government leader Major-General Michel Aoun vowed to drive some 40,000 Syrian troops from the country.

"It is a blind war and nothing is sacred... children, women, hospitals, churches, mosques... all are targets now," Doctor Fawzi Odaimi, head of the Union of Hospital owners told Reuters.

Several hospitals in both east and west Beirut have been hit by shells and rockets.

"The long years of the war have taught us to work in difficult conditions. Most hospitals were forced to move patients to basements, corridors or shelters, even though such places are not completely out of danger," said Odaimi.

As a precautionary measure, all hospitals have protected the main entrances, operating theatres, emergency sections, power generators and fuel tanks with sand bags.

Odaimi said hospitals coordinated operations to ensure they had the necessary medical and food supplies to keep functioning.

"We have already started a rationing programme to avert any possible shortage in view of the limited quantities available," said Sister Marie Leonard Mazraani, administrator of St. Charles Hospital in east Beirut.

She said scores of patients need to spend time every week on kidney machines but as a result of the destruction it has been difficult to ensure they get regular treatment.

"We have appealed to foreign countries to help us," she said. While Mazraani spoke shells began hitting the hospital and surrounding areas at the rate of one every second.

Doctors said tension caused by shelling had exacerbated the condition of many patients. Some had suffered heart attacks, nervous breakdowns and miscarriages.

Rebels accuse Iran of executing political prisoners on drug charges

NICOSIA (R) — An Iranian opposition group said Iran has executed scores of political prisoners in public this year on trumped up drug charges.

The Iraq-based Mujahideen Khalq said 31 political prisoners were executed in Tehran between January and March, two in Amol city in February and 11 in Karaj city in March, all after being convicted of drug trafficking.

It said in a statement Thursday that 200 political prisoners were executed in Hamadan city in recent months, many of them also

for supposed drug trafficking. Many of those executed were Mujahideen supporters, the group said in the statement received in Cyprus.

Iran's News Agency IRNA said Thursday that 379 traffickers had been executed nationwide since January, some of them in public squares.

Iran hanged 66 drug dealers Thursday that 379 traffickers had been executed nationwide since January, some of them in public squares.

Thursday's executions took place in Tehran, where 17 were hanged, and 19 other cities

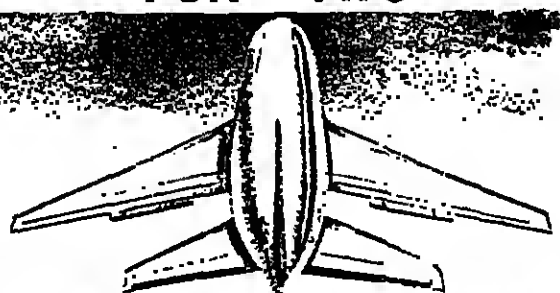
around the country, IRNA reported.

Some of the hangings were in public squares and some behind prison walls, IRNA did not give details.

Tehran Radio monitored in Cyprus Wednesday quoted Prosecutor-General Mohammad Mousavi Khoeiniha as saying "the executions will continue as long as even a single dealer is left in the country."

Four armed robbers were also hanged Thursday, IRNA reported.

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15:15	15:15	Cooking programme
16:30	16:30	Arabic series
17:30	17:30	Health programme
18:00	18:00	Religious period
18:30	18:30	Riddle
19:40	19:40	Programme review
20:00	20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	20:30	Arabic series
21:30	21:30	Programme review
21:40	21:40	Religious series
22:30	22:30	News in Arabic
23:15	23:15	Arabic series
04:15	04:15	Arabic film

PROGRAMME TWO	TIME	PROGRAMME
18:00	18:00	Couisses
18:30	18:30	Des Chiffres et de Lettres
19:00	19:00	News in French
19:15	19:15	Le 34 d'Heure du Proche
19:30	19:30	News in Hebrew
19:45	19:45	Natural Phenomena
20:00	20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	20:30	Just the Ten of us
21:30	21:30	Alfred Hitchcock presents
22:30	22:30	Sunday Variety Show
22:50	22:50	News in English
23:20	23:20	Longtime Dore

PRAYER TIMES

TIME	PRAYER
03:52	Fajr
05:12	(Sunrise) Dhuha
11:57	Dhuhr
15:12	Asr
18:43	Maghreb
19:23	Isha

CHURCHES

CHURCH	TEL
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swetlah, Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 63785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 634590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terraviva Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 625453	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 711331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 712641	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 711751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 685326	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811255	
Rabbi's Congregation Tel. 622605	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 821264	

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

A slight drop in temperature will occur, though the temperatures will remain above the annual average and winds will be northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

AMMAN	Min/Max. temp.
Amman	13 / 25
Aqaba	18 / 31
Jericho	10 / 25

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 28, Aqaba 34. Humidity readings: Amman 25 per cent, Aqaba 21 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
ANMAN:	
Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyem	620195
Dr. Anwar Musa Al Haj	771020
Dr. Mohammad Khalil	896294

Fight against locusts

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Agriculture Thursday received from Japan a gift of five vehicles especially designed to help combat the danger of the desert locusts.

The vehicles were presented to Minister of Agriculture Yusef Hamdan Al Jaber by Japanese Ambassador to Jordan Makoto Watanabe in the presence of senior ministry officials.

The minister voiced Jordan's appreciation of the gift and said his ministry hoped that bilateral cooperation will continue in all fields.

Japan has thus joined a number of countries which include the United States and West Germany among others in providing assistance to the Kingdom to help it fight off locusts which have been invading the country in the past months. In December 1988 the Ministry of Agriculture issued an appeal to all friendly nations and

organisations to provide assistance to help it in its anti-locust campaign and has been issuing instructions to the public on precautions to be taken to combat the pest.

The ministry said then that more than \$2 million were needed to cover the cost of equipment and pesticides and that only \$842,000 could be raised by Jordan in the ongoing campaign.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) late last month provided the ministry with two aircraft, specially designed to spray pesticides against the harmful insects.

Swarms of locusts which invaded the Kingdom late last year and early this year were completely wiped out, but the ministry has warned that the danger is not over and that the country could be exposed to a new locust invasion this spring.



The Arabian oryx at the Azraq Reserve (File photo).

Protection of wildlife campaign soon on TV

AMMAN (Petra) — The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) is currently preparing a 13-part television programme on the environment in Jordan in cooperation with Jordan Television and local writers in a bid to promote the drive for protecting the Jordanian environment and reduce pollution in the country, according to a report presented to the RSCN's general assembly by its President Anis Muasher.

The report noted that the RSCN is now in charge of seven wildlife reserves which had been established in the country to protect plants and animals and prevent their extinction. The report said that the seven reserves are: Shomari, Azraq, Mujib, Azraq, Zobia, Dana and Rumm. It said that the Shomari reserve is now home for the Arabian oryx, which were on the verge of extinction, and a number of species of birds and deer.

The RSCN, the report noted, is currently striving to establish a wildlife museum in Jordan in a bid to focus attention on the need to protect and preserve all types of plants and animals and highlight the country's natural history, and is going ahead with a programme of seminars and lectures to focus public attention on

these matters and on the proper means for protecting the environment.

The report reviewed the different activities carried out in the past year and referred in particular to the students clubs at schools created with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education to spread awareness among the students on the need to help protect all forms of life in the country.

The report also referred to the measures being taken by the RSCN to organise hunting of birds in Jordan according to season and said 155 violations were registered in this matter and 1,500 licences for hunting were issued to the public in the past year.

The RSCN has been in contact with the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company to curtail pollution resulting from the handling of the mineral and received \$100,000 from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to help develop the Zobia wildlife reserve, according to the report.

The report also referred to the RSCN's contacts with Saudi Arabia, Syria and Iraq for the protection of wildlife along the common borders and the annual tree planting ceremonies which help to green the country.

Jordan observes World Health Day

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan Friday observed the World Health Day as part of the endeavours of the World Health Organisation (WHO) to help promote awareness around the world.

This year the World Health Day is being observed under the slogan Let us Discuss Health this year. According to a Health Ministry official here the ministry wants to initiate a dialogue within the society to bring about consensus on the best and most efficient means for securing health for citizens.

WHO announced in 1982 that April 7 every year should be observed by all nations, each year with a particular health topic, as part of its ongoing campaign to improve health and social conditions around the globe.

In 1983 the WHO theme was Health for All by the Year 2000.

On the eve of the anniversary, Health Minister Zubair Mithas said that health protection has been given increasing attention in Jordan which has introduced measures to protect human life and health, tackling question like accidents on the road, the ban-

ning of smoking from public places and dealing with pollution problems.

The minister said that protecting children's health through vaccination campaigns and ensuring pure potable water for the public were among the many measures taken by the concerned Jordanian authorities over the past year.

The WHO director general issued an appeal on the eve of the anniversary to all responsible officials in the information fields to promote the meaning of public health through their respective services. He said that the question of health is closely linked to the social and economic development and it is incumbent on every individual to adopt measures that would ensure his or her continued good health.

Dr. Suleiman Qub'ain, director of the Health Ministry's primary health care, referred to his department's current vaccination campaigns to combat disease, extension of health services through the various health centres and the particular attention given by health authorities to Jordanian children.



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education Thouqan Hindawi Thursday arrives at Sukaina girls schools at Jabal Al Hussein to view preparation for Independence Day celebration (Petra photo).

No meningitis in Jordan

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Ministry of Health has refuted rumours of a meningitis outbreak in the Kingdom.

According to the director of the primary health care, Dr. Suleiman Qub'ain, the number of cases this year "are not much higher than the number of cases last year at the same time."

Last year 27 meningitis cases were reported by April, while this year 29 cases have been reported, mostly in the Amman, Zarqa and Irbid areas, Qub'ain said.

He said that there was an increase of meningitis cases at this time of the year because of poor

ventilation in crowded areas. "The meningitis germ is a weak germ which dies quickly after leaving the body. But, when there are lots of people and not enough air, it makes it easier for the meningitis germ to be transported."

Symptoms of the disease are similar to those of the flu, said Qub'ain. Adding that individuals may experience severe headache, fever, and, later in the course of the disease, stiffness of the neck.

Qub'ain ruled out any need for mass inoculation and said only those individuals with meningitis and people who are exposed to those affected, needed to be inoculated.

Thanks to Diabat family

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Al Hussein Medical Centre has issued a statement expressing appreciation and gratitude to the Diabat family which donated the heart of Ahmad Mahmoud Diabat, 23, upon his death at the centre last Wednesday to Ahmad Mustafa Jarrah, 47.

The statement also said that the Diabat family also donated the kidneys of the late Ahmad Diabat to Adel Daba'in 49, and Mohammad Shteivi, 28. All three transplant operations were conducted at the centre

Wednesday by a team of surgeons led by Dr. Daoud Hanania and Friday they were reported to be making good progress.

The heart transplant was the 10th to be performed by Jordanian surgeons working under the supervision of Dr. Hanania, who last month performed the ninth heart transplant after the death of the late Roman Catholic Priest William Sawalha.

The statement expressed condolences to the bereaved Diabat family and deep appreciation for their generous donations.



Qasem receives Chilean envoy

Chile's ambassador designate to Jordan Cross Johnson has presented a copy of his credentials to Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem. Johnson succeeds Carlos Bartsch who had served as Chile's ambassador here since 1985 (Petra photo)

Preparing for the big day

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Education, with its various departments and schools around the country will organise a major festival on Independence Day which falls on May 25, and preparations are underway for that occasion, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education Thouqan Hindawi announced Thursday.

He said that in accordance to ministry plans there will be a major sports festival in which students from all stages will participate.

The minister made the announcement during an inspection visit to Sukaina school for girls where he inspected the ongoing preparations for the festival. The school is currently

training some 400 male and female students from Amman and Balqa governorates to present the constitution song as part of the celebration and is preparing more than 1,600 students to present performances depicting Jordan cultural and historical backgrounds and development and progress achieved under the reign of His Majesty King Hussein. More than 2,700 students from Irbid, Zarqa and Amman governorates will be involved in other parts of the programme, according to the minister who voiced appreciation to the organisers for their strenuous efforts.

Hindawi was accompanied on the visit by the ministry's Secretary General Munther Al Masri and other senior aides.

NARCOTICS DEPARTMENT CHIEF IN EGYPT: Egyptian Interior Minister Zaki Badr Thursday discussed with a visiting Jordanian delegation, headed by Col. Ghaleb Al Zu'bi, head of the Narcotic and Forgery Control Department, scopes of cooperation in the field of control of narcotic trafficking. Badr expressed his ministry's readiness to put all its security resources at the disposal of the Arab nation (Petra).

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

TRANSPORT COOPERATION WITH SYRIA: Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Khalid Al Haj Hassan Thursday received a message from his Syrian counterpart Yusef Ahmad, dealing with bilateral cooperation in the field of transport. The message was delivered to Haj Hassan by the Syrian Ambassador to Jordan Majid Abu Saleh, who discussed with him means of developing bilateral cooperation in the fields of transport and telecommunications (Petra).

AJLOUNI REVIEWS RJ BUDGET: Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Zuhair Ajlouni Thursday reviewed the Royal Jordanian's annual report with the RJ Chairman of the board of directors and president of the audit bureau. The report covers RJ financial activities in 1987 (Petra).

LICENCES FOR HAIRDRESSERS: Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Marwan Al Hmoud Thursday requested chairman of all municipal and village councils not to issue any licences to beauty and hairdressing salons and barbers because such permits are the prerogative of the Ministry of Labour and the Vocational Training Corporation (Petra).



Police officers graduate

A group of police officers graduated from the Police Academy Thursday after completing a training course on traffic regulations, first aid and preparing reports on accidents. The participants also received military training. They received their diplomas and prizes from the Academy Director Brig. Mohammad Bassoul (Petra photo)

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ An art exhibition displaying paintings by children at the Housing Bank Complex.
- ★ An art exhibition by Sahma Hamad Al Thani at the Royal Cultural Centre.

LECTURE

- ★ A lecture entitled "Arabic Music in the Islamic Heritage" by Munir Bashir at Abdel Hamid Shoman Foundation — 8:30 p.m.

FILM

- ★ A German video for children entitled "Der Dieb von Bagdad" (The Thief of Baghdad) at the Goethe Institute — 4:00 p.m.

Ministry of Planning Secretary General Zaid Fariz (second from right) and East German Ambassador to Jordan Carl Heinz Logenheim (second from left) Thursday sign a cultural agreement between the two countries (Petra photo)

Jordan, East Germany sign cultural agreement

AMMAN (Petra) — East Germany and Jordan have agreed to implement a 1989-1991 cultural and scientific agreement and to conduct exchanges aimed to achieve that goal.

The two sides signed an executive programme for the implementation of the agreement which provides for an exchange of publications, visits by officials and sports and cultural teams and cooperation in artistic and cultural affairs.

The programme signed by Ministry of Planning's Secretary General Ziyad Fariz and East German Ambassador to Jordan Carl Heinz Logenheim also calls for close cooperation in the exchange of television and radio materials and other informational programmes, to help set up art exhibitions in either country and to facilitate visits by citizens from both countries.

UNICEF director praises Jordan's health achievements

AMMAN (Petra) — United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa Richard Reid Friday said that Jordan has succeeded in the last two decades in achieving a significant reduction in its infant mortality rate, through increasing immunisation against the major child killer diseases.

Speaking on the occasion of World Health Day, which fell on Friday, April 7, Reid said that Jordan has increased immunisation coverage among those children under one-year to more than 90 per cent, thus becoming an emulative example to the region's countries.

Reid also pointed out to Jordan's efforts in controlling diarrhoeal diseases saying it has succeeded during the last three years in reducing by half the child mortality caused by diarrhoea-induced dehydration. "Thanks to the intensive field work and effective health campaigns launched during the last three years."

He pointed out that Jordan is currently launching a campaign designed to protect the new-born babies and mothers from neonatal tetanus, another child killer disease.

Reid praised the great efforts made by the Health Ministry to

protect children and enable them to grow to their full potential.

On the pan-Arab level, Reid said Arab countries have also achieved an advanced position in the areas of immunisation and the use of Oral Rehydration Therapy in the treatment of diarrhoeal diseases.

Reid described the resolution adopted by the Council of Arab Health Ministers during its meeting in Amman in April, to reduce the infant mortality rate in the Arab World by 1990 to half of what they were in 1980, as a remarkable achievement.

The UNICEF director stressed the difference in the ever-increasing protection the Jordanian children enjoy and the insufficient protection enjoyed by children in the less-privileged countries.

However, Reid noted, the image is improving everywhere in the Arab region, even in Sudan, which also benefitted from the health services offered by Jordan.

He pointed out that Sudan, assisted by a number of international organisations is currently involved in a race against time, aimed at saving children from death caused by starvation, famine, and illness.

Reid noted that a total of 250,000 people, mostly children, died in Sudan since last May.

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Jordan Times

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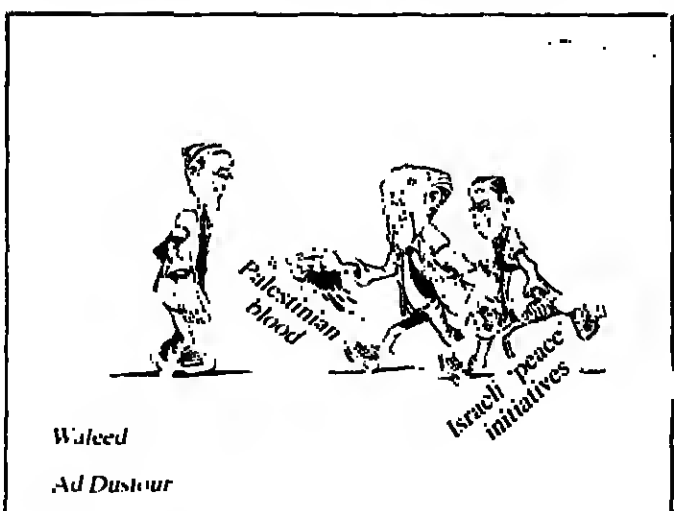
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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays. Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times Advertising Department.

Sanguine Americans

WHEN presidents George Bush and Hosni Mubarak emerged from their recent meetings in Washington all smiles, the peoples and governments of the Arab World were elated to the point of ecstasy. The euphoria among the Arab side was bolstered by President Bush's dramatic declaration that Israel must end its occupation of Arab territories, accept the political rights of the Palestinian people, and prepare itself to a "properly structured" international conference in due course. But when President Bush and Secretary of State James Baker also emerged all smiles from their encounters with visiting Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, in spite of the Arab repudiation of Shamir's infamous terms for peace in the Middle East, pessimism seeped in and perplexity ensued.

Uppermost on the minds of the Arab side is how the American administration can be equally satisfied and happy with two clearly contradictory positions offered by the Arab and Israeli sides thus far if not down right repugnant to one another? To be sure the exact and full message of Shamir to the U.S. has yet to be divulged, which gave some optimists a cause to suggest that Shamir has said something which the American administration has interpreted as offering some kind of a breakthrough. One still has to be too sanguine to the point of naivety to ever expect Shamir to offer anything that could be reasonable. Even members of his own government have already concluded that their prime minister is incapable of proposing anything that resembles a breakthrough. So what did Shamir have to say to the U.S. chief executive and his senior aides that won him so much acclaim in Washington? Everyone in the Middle East had anticipated some kind of eyeball to eyeball confrontation between President Bush and Prime Minister Shamir. That obviously did not happen. If there are really good reasons for the non-fulfillment of the Arab prophecy then all parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict would sigh with relief. But if in fact there are no good explanations, then the forces of peace working diligently for a just and durable solution to the Middle East conflict will have a real cause for concern.



JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i daily newspaper Friday tackled the fasting month of Ramadan which symbolises unity among millions of Muslims and Arabs in the face of the common challenges. The paper said that to achieve that end the Arab masses are looking with hope to the convening of an Arab summit meeting so that solidarity among the Arabs can materialise and practical steps taken to deal with the outstanding questions. The Arabs and Muslims can and should unify their ranks not only during the holy month of Ramadan but also around the year and to show the world their determination to regain their usurped rights and to struggle for the attainment of peace and security, the paper noted. It said that the Arabs and Muslims should also extend all possible aid to the people of the intifada to back their struggle for freedom. Everything possible, the paper added, should be done to support the Palestinians and also the Lebanese to end Israel's occupation of their land and bring about peace to the Arab region.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily criticises President Bush's stand while relating to the Palestine question. Rakan Al Majali says that while the president declares his opposition to the establishment of a Palestinian state he at the same time says that Israeli occupation should end and that Israel cannot annex the Arab lands. The writer who is also the paper's editor says that all indications point to the fact that Bush is now inclined to help the Israelis hold the so-called elections in the occupied territories in a bid to appease the ongoing intifada and end the Arab people's protest against Israel's presence in the occupied lands, the writer notes. The elections question is nothing but an Israeli project intended to find a substitute for the PLO, the writer adds. The American president's statement, he says, is nothing but a riddle, and in the final analysis it is a recipe for an end to the intifada and an end to the hopes and aspirations of the Palestinian people.

Al Dustour daily comments on Shamir's talks with President Bush and the adamant position of the Israeli government. It is clear that Shamir has conveyed his intransigent stand to the U.S. administration, a stand which is designed to abort the intifada through the so-called elections under Israeli supervision, the paper said. This is an open manoeuvre on the part of Israel that can never succeed and it is unlikely that the Bush administration will ever accept such a plan, the paper added. It said that if it did then the U.S. credibility will be in jeopardy again and that the feeling that peace will be achieved can never be strengthened in the Middle East region. We sincerely hope that the U.S. administration will not miss this chance of taking serious steps towards ending the Arab-Israeli conflict through an international peace conference.

Numeiri's legacy haunts Sudan

By Alfred Taban
Reuters

KHARTOUM — Four years after dictator Jaafar Numeiri was deposed, the future of Sudan's democracy and its hopes of preventing mass starvation and total economic collapse hinge on ending its civil war — his most contentious legacy.

After 16 years in power, Numeiri was overthrown on April 6, 1985, by the military who stepped down a year later after the first free polls in nearly two decades were held.

Four years on, Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi's fifth coalition, sworn in 11 days ago under pressure from army chiefs demanding an end to the war, says peace is its top priority.

Khartoum-based Western and Arab diplomats warn however that the failure of current efforts to end the war, whose start is widely blamed on

Numeiri, is likely to cause the fighting to rage on for years and lead to political upheavals.

"Mahdi has put everything on the line," said one diplomat. "If he fails to end the war, the government will have to go and he with it."

The militant National Islamic Front (NIF) opposition party posed the most serious threat to the peace process, the diplomats said. Its control of Khartoum's business community could serve as its most effective weapon against the coalition.

The NIF, whose 50 parliamentary seats belie its political clout in northern Sudan, has vowed to bring down Mahdi's new coalition and to impose Islamic Sharia laws with what it calls the power of the masses.

"The stakes are high and the militants will throw everything they have into the battle to sabotage the peace process," said one diplomat. "They have the re-

sources to do it."

Sharia, anathema to the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), was first introduced by Numeiri in 1983 but has been largely dormant since his overthrow.

Politicians in Khartoum blame Numeiri for starting the war by dividing the south into three regions in violation of a 1972 peace pact giving it autonomous rule after 17 years of strife.

His imposition of Sharia swelled rebel ranks when non-Muslim southerners were subjected to such Islamic punishments as amputation of limbs and floggings.

The war and a resultant famine have claimed tens of thousands of lives and sent hundreds of thousands of people fleeing from the vast south to elsewhere in Sudan or to neighbouring Ethiopia and Uganda in search of food and security.

An estimated 250,000 people

died of hunger or disease last year in south Sudan, and the United Nations, which is launching a major relief operation in the south, says 100,000 could perish this year unless help reaches them soon.

The diplomats said most of Sudan's Western donors, whose aid is crucial to keep the country's beleaguered economy afloat, were making future development assistance conditional on an end to the war, which costs Khartoum's cash-strapped treasury an estimated \$1 million every day.

Africa's largest country, Sudan is burdened by a \$13-billion foreign debt it cannot repay. Recurrent labour unrest, an industry operating at a fraction of capacity and a crumbling infrastructure are among its chronic economic ills.

The fighting in the south, pitting troops against an estimated 40,000 SPLA guerrillas, has also

deprived Sudan the use of a major oil find in the southern Upper Nile region and brought to a halt major irrigation schemes.

The diplomats said that besides the threat posed by Muslim militants advocating a military solution to the war, the SPLA had yet to show willingness to reciprocate Khartoum's peace initiative.

SPLA leader John Garang has described as a positive step a government decision to adopt a tentative peace accord by signed last November with Mohammed Osman Al Mirghani, head of the co-ruling Democratic Unionist Party (DUP).

Garang, however, made a fresh demand by saying parliament should reverse a December decision to reject the SPLA-DUP accord. He also rejected a U.N. proposal for a ceasefire in April to allow relief supplies into the south.

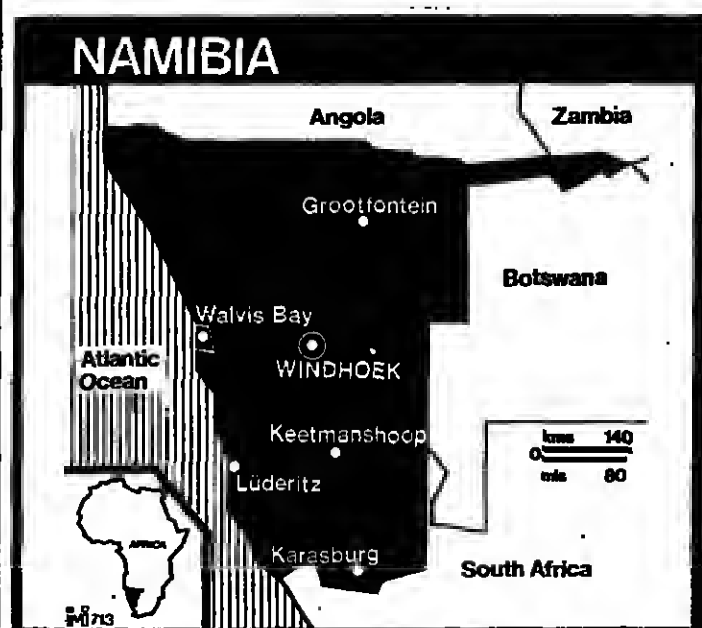
Mahdi accepted the proposal but Garang would only agree to

safe passage to relief convoys. The SPLA has claimed a series of military victories in recent months and the diplomats said its recent successes in the battlefield might tempt the guerrilla movement to resist peace overtures made by Khartoum with the blessing of the West.

"If he (Garang) misses this chance or drags his feet, everybody will be on his back," said one Western diplomat, pointing out that recent SPLA contacts with Western governments might be jeopardised by such conduct.

Army generals who publicly asked Mahdi in February to spend more on defence or enter peace negotiations with the SPLA were likely to renew their demands if the war did not end soon, the diplomats said.

"The troops just have no wish to continue the fight regardless of who is responsible for the war's continuation," said a Western diplomat.



U.N. problems in Namibia not the first

By Anthony Goodman
Reuters

UNITED NATIONS — The United Nations, which won a Nobel Prize last year for peacekeeping, suffered a black eye this week in Namibia but it was not the first time that the world body had run into trouble in the field.

Another African peacekeeping operation, in the former Belgian Congo (now Zaire), led to the near-collapse of the United Nations and cost the life of its second secretary-general, Dag Hammarskjöld.

When the United Nations began in Namibia last week, one of its most ambitious operations since the Congo, it was to be the accompaniment of machine-gun and rocket fire.

SWAPO fighters, who have been battling South African rule in the territory for 23 years, clashed with local police on the Namibia-Angola border, leaving more than 180 dead so far. U.N. peacekeepers were nowhere near the action.

Most of the 900 troops in the U.N. Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) which is to oversee Namibia's advance to independence were still awaiting deployment and the bulk of the 4,650-member force had yet to arrive in the territory.

Their commander, General Dewan Prem-Chand of India, authorised South African troops to leave their bases, drawing a storm of African delegates' protests against UNTAG.

As Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar hurried to re-coup and get the operation back on track, veteran diplomats recalled that it was not the first time that peacekeeping had landed the United Nations in political trouble.

The 1960-64 Congo operation aimed at helping what is now Zaire to consolidate independence from Belgium and combat threats of secession turned into the worst-ever U.N. disaster.

The operation, which at its height involved nearly 20,000 troops, cost more than \$400 million — an enormous sum at the time, but slightly less than the proposed cost of UNTAG — and took the lives of about 230 U.N. soldiers.

It also landed the United Nations in a grave financial and political crisis that virtually paralysed the organisation.

Hammarskjöld, in bitter conflict with the Soviet Union, was no longer recognised by Moscow and his relations with the United States, Britain and France cooled perceptibly. Congo political turmoil eventually cost his life in September 1961 in a plane crash when he was on a peace mission in the region.

In 1967, when U Thant of Burma was secretary-general, the

United Nations was blamed for precipitating the six-day Middle East war by according to Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser's demand to withdraw U.N. buffer troops sent to Sinai and the Gaza after Britain, France and Israel had invaded Suez in 1956.

U Thant referred Nasser's request to the Security Council, which did not object. The Burmese official always maintained that an arrangement made between Hammarskjöld and Cairo left him with no choice but to pull out the U.N. emergency force, some elements of which were already leaving unilaterally.

Other U.N. operations have run into trouble. The U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) has had an uneasy existence since its formation in 1978 — partly because it functions in an area lacking any effective central government and criss-crossed by a profusion of private militias.

But other U.N. forces and observation groups have managed to function with only minor hitches, including the U.N. peacekeeping force in Cyprus — marking its 25th anniversary — and the U.N. disengagement observer force stationed between the Syrian and Israeli armies on the Golan Heights since 1974.

Rebel movement beset with problems 20 years into insurgency

By Robert H. Reid
The Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — Communist rebels have suffered major setbacks since President Corason Aquino took power and are struggling to forge a new strategy against a popular government as the "people's war" enters its 21st year.

There is evidence the Communist Party of the Philippines is shifting back toward a rural-based strategy after the failure of its urban campaign and is becoming more selective in recruiting after military agents infiltrated its ranks.

But officials and political commentators believe the party's armed wing, the New People's Army, will remain a serious threat as long as the pro-Western government is unable to improve the lives of the millions who live in abject poverty.

"Today at the national level, the insurgents appear to be on the defensive and attempting to regroup," Rear Adm. Timothy W. Wright, acting U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, told a U.S. congressional committee last February.

"In the provinces, however, where the struggle is primarily waged, the picture is less clear," he added.

Assessing the strength of the rebellion is difficult, since most of the activity takes place in remote areas where communications are poor. Much of the information available in the capital on rebel activity comes from the 163,000-member Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Weakened insurgency

Nonetheless, there is a public perception, especially in Manila, that the insurgency has weakened since a popular uprising toppled President Ferdinand Marcos's authoritarian administration in February 1986.

Rebel propaganda portrays Mrs. Aquino as no different from Marcos. But most Filipinos still support her and do not blame her personally for her government's shortcomings.

"Without going into statistics, there is a feeling in the population that the insurgency is in disarray," military Chief of Staff

Gen. Renato De Villa said in an interview with the Philippines Free Magazine. "I think the most important development is the realisation that is spreading that the insurgent alternative is not that palatable."

That perception has arisen despite military reports that fighting actually escalated in 1988, from 3,118 clashes in 1987 to 3,525 last year.

Areas reporting increased fighting include southern districts of Luzon, the main island, and the Davao and Misamis oriental provinces on Mindanao.

The military says more than 3,900 people, including guerrillas, government troops and civilians, were killed last year in "insurgency-related incidents," a 1.63 per cent increase over 1987.

The military also acknowledges that guerrillas influence nearly 8,000 of the 41,000 villages and urban wards. Rebels operate in about 65 of the 73 provinces.

But the military also claims guerrilla strength declined by 8.4 per cent last year to about 23,000 fighters. Western sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity, suspect this may be simply a refinement in the military's estimate, which was too high during Marcos' final years.

In his testimony, Wright noted the favourable military reports but said there was no way to verify them "nor are they conclusive of a significant or lasting setback" to the rebels.

Reverses

Clearly, however, the Communist Party has suffered reverses. They include the arrests in the past year of eight members of its central committee, including Secretary General Rafael Baylosis, and more than 30 regional and provincial officers.

Western sources with close ties to the military say the arrests were made because government informants penetrated senior party ranks during the final years of the Marcos administration when membership rolls swelled.

Despite rebel attempts to win foreign support, hotly Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and Chinese Leader Deng Xiaoping have personally assured Mrs. Aquino they will not support the insurgents. The rebels acknowledge their main

source of weapons comes from raids on government forces.

In addition, a rebel strategy of escalating violence, which led to almost-daily street assassinations in Manila and other cities, produced a backlash among urban groups whom the rebels hoped to recruit.

The perception that the insurgency is waning may stem in part from a recent reduction in rebel and left-wing activity in the capital, which peaked in the months following Marcos' ouster and the rise of Mrs. Aquino to power.

Since the party was founded in December 1968, it had followed the strategy of late Chinese leader Mao Tse-tung in building a base in the impoverished rural areas from which to isolate the urban centres.

But the overthrow of Marcos and the rise of Mrs. Aquino afforded the party new opportunities to expand into Manila. The rebels acknowledge they made a tactical error in boycotting the February 1986 election between Marcos and Mrs. Aquino, held two weeks before the uprising.

After taking power, Mrs. Aquino freed hundreds of political prisoners, including party founder Jose Maria Sison, who now lives in the Netherlands. She offered peace talks and negotiated a 60-day ceasefire in December 1986.

Rebel leaders such as Satur Ocampo and Antonio Zamel, both former journalists, emerged from years in the underground to appear on television talk shows and at public rallies.

Both joined nearly 100,000 people in a funeral march for slain labour leader Rolando Olalia during which Communist flags were openly displayed.

The rebels also used the ceasefire to infiltrate nearly 3,000 "armed city partisans" into Manila. After peace talks collapsed and fighting resumed, guerrillas launched a campaign of street assassinations, killing nearly 100 police, soldiers and officials during 1987 in Manila alone.

Failed strategy

But rebels acknowledge that the urban strategy failed. Indiscriminate killings alarmed the urban classes. They also prompted sometimes draconian responses from the police.

In Bacolod, police drew up a list of suspected left-wing sympathisers and warned the rebels they would liquidate five of them for every policeman slain. Street killings there ceased.

Manila police organised a network of armed informants and launched a series of mass raids in which hundreds of civilians were rounded up for questioning.

The strategy led to protests from human-rights groups, but prompted slum-dwellers to turn in guerrillas to avoid harassment.

Human-rights groups even took out paid advertisements in Manila newspapers urging the rebels to scale down their killings for fear the military would target them in reprisal. The military claims such groups are rebel sympathisers.

The military claims the failure of the urban strategy led to a shakeup of the party's Manila branch in which more than 50 members were investigated, either for mistakes or as suspected military informants. Some were executed, the military claims.

In a recent issue of its official organ and bayan (The Nation), the central committee acknowledged it was reassessing "the nature and style of operations of armed city partisans" and the need for shifting away from "a purely military viewpoint."

Rural organisation

That, in turn, appears to have led to new emphasis on rural organisation. About two-thirds of the 58 million Filipinos live in rural areas, which have so far not benefitted from improvements in the economy. There, the rebels hope to expand their system of shadow governments and recruit followers.

"We are now trying to professionalise leaders in preparation for building provisional revolutionary governments," said one rebel official on Negros island, who used the pseudonym Fidel Castro. "We also need a higher level of training" to combat government counterinsurgency strategy.

As part of that strategy, Defence Secretary Fidel Ramos said in December that rebels have seized more than 31,000 hectares (76,500 acres) of land nationwide, and are distributing tracts to landless farmers.

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Dramatic woodblock prints from Japan

Japanese art is being received with a growing fascination. The latest presentation from Japan is an exhibition of woodblock prints devoted solely to the actors on the country's traditional stage.

By Natalie Warren-Green

OXFORD — Some of the most striking representations of actors on stage in different roles come from Japanese woodblock print-makers whose work is on display at a current exhibition in Oxford.

Japanese art is gradually gaining ground outside the country. Collectors of Japanese art from virtually all periods range from Arab and South Asian businessmen to European and American individuals, corporations and museums.

Theatre prints is an art form which is singularly Japanese. Theatre prints were the staple production of the Kasukawa school in Japan during the second half of the 18th century. Some other printmakers also dabbled in the art but it was not until the Utagawa school took over the specialty that printmaking of the actors on stage really took off. It is the pictures from this school that are being shown by the historic Ashmolean Museum.

Figures of Actors on the Stage was the first major series of actor prints by the highly acclaimed artist Toyokuni (1769-1825).

They were published during 1794-6, while Toyokuni was still in his mid-twenties. At present, 52 designs from the series are known, all of which show a tall, full-length figure in the large oban format. This became a standard way of depicting actors in subsequent years and was reflected in the portrayal of Nakamura Nakabo II (Masatsuya) and of the actor Katakata Nizemon VII.

Later in his career, Toyokuni portrayed the actor Nakamura Utaemon III performing seven

changes of role in a dance sequence performed in 1811. These 'quick change' dance skits, or *benigemono*, allowed actors to display to the full their dexterity and virtuosity at interpreting different roles and were particularly popular in the early 19th century.

Nakamura Utaemon III was the principal star of Kabuki in the Kyoto/Osaka area. In the 1811 performance he took turns to represent, among others, a courtesan, a blind musician, and a salt maiden.

Toyokuni also produced a *suimono* colour woodblock print (c. 1820) of the actor Ichikawa Danjuro VII in the Shibaraku role. "Suimono" are small, deluxe prints employing lavish printing techniques, including metal pigments and embossing, which were specially commissioned by poetry clubs — in this case poets who were supporters of the actors depicted.

Utagawa Kunisada (1786-1864) was one of the most prolific graphic artists of all time. His total output, including book illustrations, has been estimated at some 50,000 designs during a working career of over 50 years. He produced one such *suimono*, with metallic pigments in 1827, depicting the actors Ichikawa Danjuro VII and Bando Mitsugoro III in an armour tugging scene.

During the late 1920s Kunisada studied the Kano genre style of the earlier master Hanabusa Itcho (1652-1724) and used the signature 'Hanabusa Itcho' on a number of prints issued during this period.

Mampachiro was a fashionable restaurant in Edo, often the venue for 'poetry and painting parties', or *shogakai*, where famous artists, writers and other celebrities would paint or write poems impromptu for the assembled paying guests. Kunisada portrayed actors producing paintings to order at one such *shogakai* in the restaurant in a *suimono* colour woodblock print (c. 1830).

Further colour woodblock prints followed, and between the years 1810-1820, Kunisada portrayed Nakamura Utaemon III in a 'retirement', or *ise ichida* performance. But Utaemon III acted 'retirement' performances on several occasions when he left Edo to return to his native Osaka, making it difficult to know to which performance the prints relate.

In 1852, Kunisada designed a series of actor portraits with backgrounds based on designs from the famous landscape series *53 Stations of the Tokaido Highway* (1833-34) by Ando Hiroshige (1797-1858). So great was the success of the series that Kunisada produced further portraits with landscape backgrounds of places 'in-between' the famous 53 stations. At present a total of 129 designs are recorded from the series.

Also in 1852, Kunisada produced a colour woodblock print (pentateuch) of the *Five Chivalrous Men*. Led by Karigane Bunshichi, they were champions of the common man against injustices perpetrated by evil samurai, and as such were popular heroes of the Kabuki stage.

Master of the humorous, the bizarre and the macabre, the artist Kuniyoshi (1797-1861) developed his own unusual and gifted method of producing prints in such a way that the images he created were both sinister and menacing. He carefully wiped the printing blocks to produce subtle gradations of colour which created startling, and harrowing images. One of these was of the actor Ichikawa Kodanji IV as a blond drenched ghost and of Bando Hikosaburo IV as a warrior

(1851).

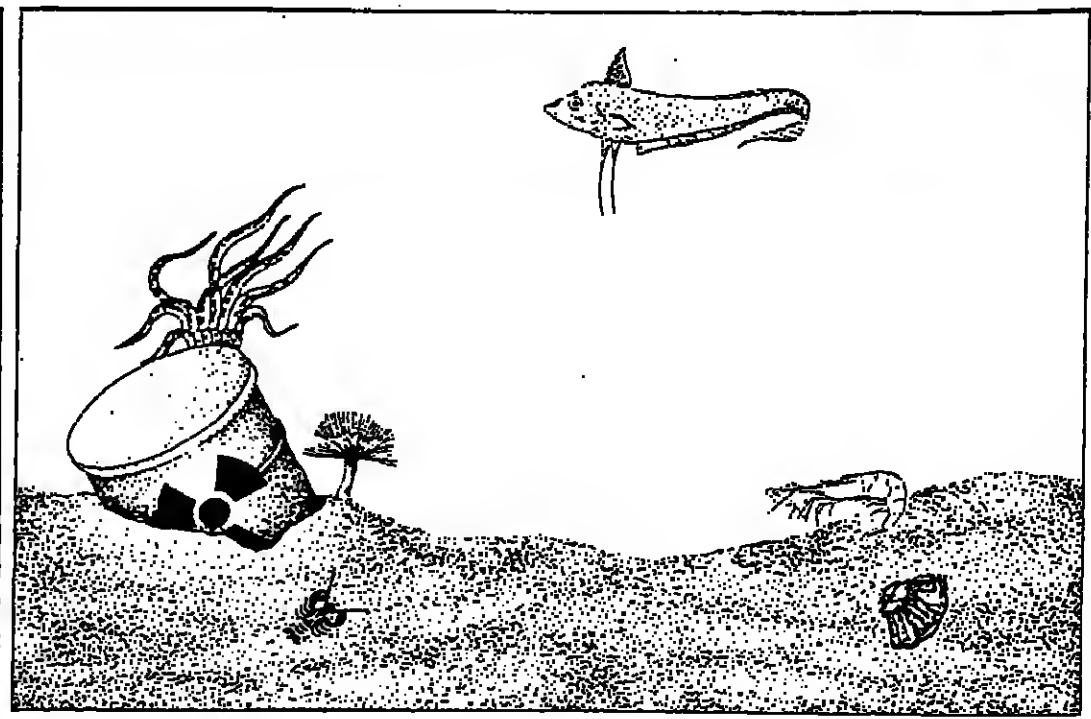
More humorous prints were *Caricatures (of Actors) Scribbled on a Storehouse Wall* (c.1847). Kuniyoshi pays the ultimate tribute to the actors' street popularity by drawing their portraits and adding appreciative remarks as if scribbled by some workman on a storehouse wall. Even the artists' signature and the publisher's trademark appear as graffiti at the bottom of the print as a finishing touch of humour.

The phenomenal success of Kunisada's series of actor portraits set against landscapes of the Tokaido highway encouraged Kuniyoshi to attempt works of a similar type. There was considerable rivalry between these two

star pupils of Toyokuni, each so different in artistic temperament.

One of Kunisada's most talented pupils was the artist Toyahara Kunichika (1835-1900), who produced a memorial portrait of his artistic master, showing Kunisada after he had taken Buddhist vows with shaven head, as was the custom in old age. There is a long inscription by the writer Kanagaki Robun (1829-94) which includes information about Kunisada's life, not recorded elsewhere.

Kunisada was succeeded as head of the Utagawa school by his son-in-law, who took the name Kunisada II and continued the tradition of colour woodblock printing. — *Academic File*.



Deep-sea barrels and barrels of death

Deep-sea dumping of nuclear wastes is fraught with unknown risks for marine populations, since scientists are still trying to figure out the levels at which radiation becomes dangerous for the different species in the seas.

By Maryam Schiller

VIENNA — Nuclear waste disposal is increasingly wrapped up in myths. One of the most prevalent ones is that what's safe for humans must be safe for other species, too.

Not quite, say nuclear scientists currently involved with research. With undersea nuclear waste disposal increasing becoming the norm, attention has been drawn to the risk of nuclear waste radiation spreading from the so-called "abiotic" or lifeless areas into populated areas of the sea and playing havoc with marine life.

Normally the waste is stored in what the waste disposal experts maintain are areas with minimal marine life. The waste, usually of low radioactivity, is currently

being stored at depths of no less than 4,000 metres (13,000 feet) under seas. That ensures, say the experts, safety in "considerable dilution" of the radioactive material and in distance from human and marine life.

But recent studies maintain that the distance or the immediate abiotic marine environment offer no guarantee at all that such waste will not damage life in the seas. In undersea disposal, "unlike geological disposal, there are no impermeable barriers, and it is possible to postulate that deep sea marine organisms could sustain high levels of exposure from dumping onto the seabed, while levels to man are kept low," says Amelia Hagen, nuclear safety expert at the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency

(IAEA). Nuclear waste destined for undersea disposal currently is selected on the basis of the IAEA's guidelines in force since 1972. But the guidelines were arrived at by measuring the effect of radioactive exposure on human beings. There are no generally accepted dose limits for other species or whole populations of different species, although the guidelines ostensibly seek protection of whole communities, rather than single species.

Information on the effect of radiation on aquatic life remains incomplete, she says. However, recent research by the agency was able to establish that prolonged exposure of marine animals to radioactive waste dumped at the sea floor could create a major problem. The greatest risks to molluscs, for example, are caused by prolonged exposure to caesium-137, zinc-65, plutonium-239 and other radioactive material released by nuclear waste. — *Academic File*.



A Soviet hero

By Ralph Boulton
Renter

MOSCOW — Rebel Communist Boris Yeltsin, a hero of the Moscow crowds but a maverick to his party enemies, looks set for a political comeback with a sweeping victory in Sunday's Soviet elections.

Railing against party privilege and decrying chronic food shortages, Yeltsin has struck a popular note with Muscovites who have flocked to his rallies. Yeltsin posters plaster walls and buses, his heavy, peasant face smiles from badges.

"He's the only one who speaks our language and understands the way we think," one working class Muscovite said when asked why he was voting for Yeltsin.

Many supporters from Sverdlovsk, where Yeltsin started his political career as regional chief in 1976, re-registered in Moscow to cast their vote for him here. Some brought their own posters displayed prominently in public meeting places.

The stakes are high for Yeltsin. His victory against a conservative Communist rival in the first multi-candidate elections here for 70 years would virtually ensure him of a role in future decision-making.

Yeltsin, 58, a heavily-built man with white hair, worked his way up from a peasant home to become a factory director and then local party chief.

Soon after his rise to power in the Kremlin, Mikhail Gorbachev summoned him to Moscow to help fire his new "Perestroika" policies and root out rampant corruption in the Moscow party machinery.

Blunt and impatient

But his blunt and sometimes impatient manner earned him enemies in the ruling politburo, where he was a junior non-voting member.

Yeltsin pushed Gorbachev to step up the pace of economic reform and take more urgent action to ease the plight of life throughout the Soviet Union — food shortages.

He also urged abolition of spe-

cial shops and other privileges for the party elite, making highly publicised trips to shops and de-lighting Muscovites by riding on public transport.

"One day, (Yeltsin) arrived at our factory on a tram," Central Committee member Vladimir Tikhomirov wrote in a bitter public criticism of Yeltsin last week. "But very few people knew that B.N. Yeltsin got out of his car and boarded that tram only one stop before the factory."

Yeltsin was deeply wounded when, in late 1987, he was summoned to a meeting of Moscow communists and stripped of his post as leader of the city party. He apologised to Gorbachev and said he had been too ambitious — a declaration he later withdrew.

"I was taken from my hospital bed to the session. In the condition I was at the time it's not surprising I said things I did not really feel. I don't think I'm over-ambitious," he later told Soviet television.

Asked by reporters at his polling station Sunday what his ambitions were, he said in a deep drawing voice: "I want to be a deputy. As for what comes after, I'm not a fortune teller."

He blames his falling-out with Gorbachev on Yegor Ligachev, widely seen as the leading conservative in the politburo, and believes Ligachev helped engineer an inquiry by the party central committee into accusations that his radical remarks on political reform violated official policy.

Political conclusions

"You, Boris, have not drawn the correct political conclusions," Ligachev told him from the podium of a party conference in 1987, just before his fall from grace.

Yeltsin's penetrating blue eyes and aggressive manner and his clear delight in his newly-won acclaim, suggest a tough, determined nature.

"Struggle is always struggle. It involves attack and defence and knock-outs also happen. I have had to go through all of these," he said in a recent interview.

Nigeria: task force to find alternatives

By O'senn Ogunseitan

LAGOS — A presidential task force now in search of environmentally desirable alternative sources of fuel in Nigeria has recommended reviewing the country's tree-planting strategy against the dangerously encroaching Sahara desert.

The task force may suggest that an intensified exploitation of the country's coal and vast, but untapped tar sand deposits should be the pivot of the government's war against the increased felling of scarce trees along the Sahara desert fringes along the country's northern border.

In what may be the most radical turnaround for Nigeria's 13-year-old fight against the Sahara, President Ibrahim Babangida has personally heard from leading environmentalists in the country that only the development of alternative sources of fuel will win the war against the wanton destruction of the delicate savanna ecology.

The Minister of Works, Housing and Environment indicated

the government's willingness to try out new strategies, "now that it is clear that all past tree-planting campaigns and follow-up actions by the government have gone down the drain."

He added that "the trees no longer seem 'capable' of withstanding the blistering desert climate." He was referring to the fact that many trees planted in the anti-desertification war hardly live for more than six months in the field, once out of nurseries.

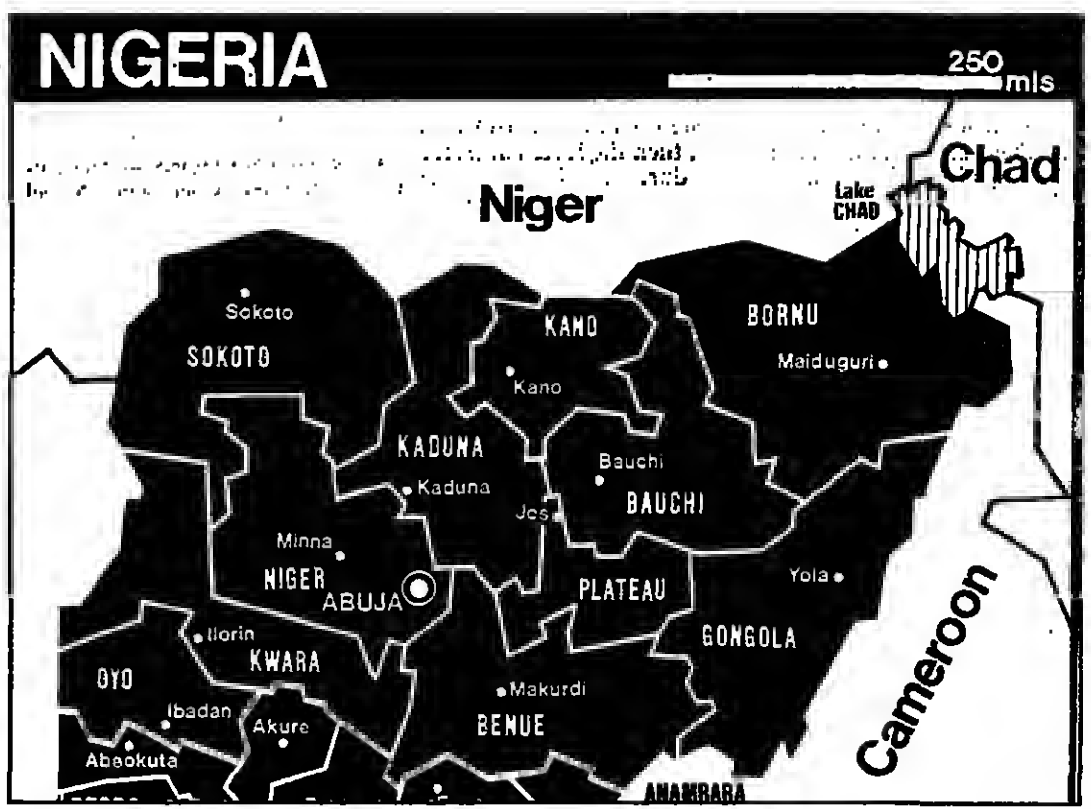
Barbados: boost to food industry

By Ulric Rice

ST. JAMES — A fresh filip has been given to the food crop sector of Barbados' agriculture by the start of construction on a food processing plant.

The Minister of Agriculture, Evelyn Greaves, said that the \$1.5 million project sponsored by the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) came out of the government's commitment to

accommodate the special needs of small entrepreneurs. The food processing plant is expected to provide a link between industry and agriculture and can contribute to the goals of the country's food diversification programme. Greaves said that the plant is expected to contribute to a fall in food imports, a growth in exports, an increase in foreign exchange earnings, and the creation of further employment — *Passes*.



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South Jordan needs tourism, industrial push

AQABA (Petra) — A meeting to revise development projects in the southern regions of Jordan ended Thursday when the participants issued several recommendations designed to promote tourism, vocational training, agriculture, transport and other sectors.

The meeting, which was held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and was attended by several cabinet ministers, concluded that tourism and industry, especially in the port city of Aqaba, should be supported by creating a good climate for investment and improving facilities for visitors.

A statement issued at the end of the meeting called for the development of traditional crafts that contribute to tourism, the participation of local sectors in marketing Jordan's tourist attractions abroad, alongside the Ministry of Tourism and the Royal Jordanian, and the enactment of legislations to help in this endeavour.

The statement called on the Royal Jordanian to increase its flights between Amman and Aqaba to promote tourism and encourage Jordanians to visit the port city and the spas of Aqaba and Barbita and other tourist attractions in the south.

The statement called on the concerned authorities to build a road to link the Dead Sea with Aqaba and the Nabatean town of Petra in the course of efforts to encourage tourism.

The statement voiced the participants' hopes for the government to create incentives for the national and the Arab shipping lines and the Jordanian private sector to purchase ships that can be used for transporting phosphate mined in southern Jordan. It also urged the Aqaba Railway Corporation to step up efforts to increase to 7.5 million tonnes the annual amounts of phosphate transported to Aqaba for export.

The participants heard a report by the local committee entrusted with examining the agricultural sector in southern Jordan. The report recommended a set of measures to help protect the agricultural land, to provide sufficient water for irrigation and to protect the water basins in the south.

Agricultural projects and facilities for investments in the south will help stem the movement and migration of local inhabitants, the statement said. It added that a reduction in the cost of water for farmers and providing higher amounts of animal feed are



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan expresses his evaluation on the subject of development in the southern regions during the final session of a meeting which concluded Thursday (Petra photo).

cultural land, to provide sufficient water for irrigation and to protect the water basins in the south.

had left their hometowns to return to the south and participated in the economic development process.

The southern regions of Jordan account for nearly 50 per cent of the total area of the country and can absorb one third of the overall amounts of investments, but, unfortunately, the Crown Prince said the area now is home for only 10 per cent of the country's population.

Crown Prince Hassan, who opened the meeting Wednesday, called on the inhabitants of the southern regions of Jordan who

some banks were facing trouble, which created a run on deposits stretching the limits at some banks.

Bankers said up to \$200 million had been withdrawn from one bank alone within six weeks.

They said the liquidity squeeze was likely to backslash on another front — repayment of about \$4 billion in private debts.

Some bankers said domestic foreign currency loans made when the dollar was worth about 0.80 pounds were likely to be dropped, at least in part, as bad debts.

High demand for dollars

Bankers expect the shortage to worsen later this month when

placed at nearly 20 per cent of national income, and two or three years of importing giant stocks of goods from the West.

The imports could be sold at 10 times their cost and thus both help to balance the state budget and satisfy consumer demand, Selyunin proposed.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and other Kremlin leaders have said they oppose such massive imports, preferring to spend money on modernising Soviet industry instead.

Parliamentarian urges more radical reform

Meanwhile agricultural economist Vladimir Ilkhonov, a new member of the Soviet parliament, says farm reforms adopted last month did not go far enough to produce the agrarian revolution he feels his country needs.

He told Reuters in an interview in London that an election last week for the new Soviet parliament had strengthened the hand of reformers pushing for more radical measures in agriculture.

"This is the defeat of the party apparatus," he said of the voting, in which dozens of party bureaucrats were defeated and a bloc of progressives was elected.

Ilkhonov, who frequently comments in the Soviet press about why farming policy is going wrong and the harm collectivisation did to the country, was elected by the Academy of Agricultural Sciences to one of the parliamentary seats reserved for professional organisations.

The sooner real reform is introduced the better, he wrote. "Because otherwise we'll have to be introducing economic reform under the conditions of economic chaos."

The government could have begun raising prices on plentiful, easily substituted items, but now it is too late because virtually everything is in short supply, he said.

Today we have to choose between only two realities: Either relatively stable prices with minor inflation of about six per cent and empty shelves, or quickly rising prices and goods in the stores," he said.

Selyunin's prescriptions for fixing the economy included cuts in military spending, which he

Arab cooperatives to discuss poultry production in Iraq soon

AMMAN (Petra) — A seminar to deal with poultry production in the Arab World and the role of cooperatives in promoting this industry will be held in Baghdad soon, according to Mousa Arafah, deputy director of the Jordan Cooperative Organisation (JCO).

He made the announcement upon returning to Amman from Cairo where he took part in a meeting by the Arab Cooperatives Union which was attended by delegates from 13 Arab states.

Arafah said the delegates from the four countries of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC), which was formed in Baghdad recently, held a series of separate meetings to discuss means of facilitating the flow of agricultural products from and into any of the four-member states.

Referring to the decision about the meeting in Baghdad Arafah said that the meeting will address issues that impede closer cooperation among cooperatives in the Arab World.

Syria makes barren land bloom

MESKANE (R) — Near a huge dam in north Syria the waters of the river Euphrates are making parched land bloom in a drive for national self-sufficiency in food.

The dam at Lake Assad is the heart of a project to irrigate 6,400 square kilometres hectares of useless scrubland to help feed Syria's 10 million people.

Wheat, rice, cotton and fruit are already being grown thanks to newly-built pumps and pipes, easing a food import bill that foreign diplomats have estimated at half of foreign exchange income.

At Meskane on the western shore of the lake, engineer Mohammad Hussein explained a new stage of the ambitious project — to irrigate 500 square kilometres by 1990.

Officials say the year-old government of Prime Minister Mahmoud Zubi, a former agri-

cultural engineer, has given new impetus to agricultural development.

"We have priority (over other economic sectors) in delivery of equipment and tools," said an official. "Rules limiting the number of personnel are not applied to us."

But since the dam was built in 1973, only 700 square kilometres of land has been irrigated under the project which aims to eventually transform the local economies around the towns of Dayr Al Zour, Raqqa, Althawra and Aleppo.

The volume of water in Lake Assad, named after President Hafez Al Assad, has risen by more than 15 per cent to 14

billion cubic metres as the dam has been raised.

High rainfall last year helped nationwide cereal output reach six million tonnes, more than twice 1987 production. This year less rain has fallen but officials predict another bumper harvest.

Syria's farms, some state-run and some private, export fruit, vegetables, cotton and a hard strain of wheat, but the country imports large amounts of soft wheat for making ordinary bread.

Two dams in Turkey higher up the Euphrates river are affecting the flow of the river, an official said.

An official said three-way talks on harnessing the river are held regularly with Iraq.

Bankers expect further decline for pound

Egyptian currency black market rebounds strongly

CAIRO (R) — Egypt's foreign currency black market, subdued for nearly two years after economic reforms, is staging a powerful comeback and threatening further depreciation of the Egyptian pound, bankers say.

An acute liquidity shortage, coinciding with high demand on the dollar, has forced the pound to unprecedented lows and bankers expect further decline.

They said the rebound of the black market reflected a lack of confidence in government policy.

"It's a vicious circle. We are now back to the days when the black market controlled hard currency and the value of the pound," said one banker.

The dollar fetched 2.90 pounds on the black market last week against 2.45 on the official free market set up in 1987. The official rate is set daily by a committee of bankers.

"The pound has been shrinking, I expect it (the official rate) to dip to 2.70 or three against the dollar in the next few months," another banker said.

Analysts said the decline

appeared partly spurred by a spate of rumours, including one that the military was buying dollars from the street to meet debt commitments.

Low remittances

Bankers said a decline in remittances from Egyptians working abroad, the country's main hard currency earner, had created a shortage of funds in the official market and helped deepen the crisis.

"The drop in dollar revenue on the official market amounts to 40 per cent," an analyst with a public sector bank said.

"Problem of confidence"

"It's a problem of confidence," he said. "People can no longer trust the economy of the administration."

He cited a government crackdown on Islamic investment houses last year which deprived hundreds of thousands of small depositors from monthly returns paid by these firms and froze millions of dollars in investments.

The government feared the

Islamic companies, which paid higher returns than banks, were unstable pyramid schemes that threatened the economy.

"The ordinary Egyptian worker in the Gulf is bewildered by the crackdown because the Islamic companies have been working for years in the country and dealing with the government and public sector," the bank analyst said.

"Such people have ceased to transfer their dollars through the official banking system," he said.

Inflation likely to rise

Bankers said the turmoil on the dollar market was likely to raise inflation, now running at about 25 per cent.

"The consumer will bear the brunt of the decline in the value of the pound," a private banker said.

The Egyptian pound, which faced a 60 per cent de facto devaluation due to the economic reforms of 1987, has seen its value cut by 10 piastres (four cents) against the dollar on the official market over the past month.

This was the biggest monthly decline since the government set up the official foreign exchange market in May 1987 to curb speculation against the local currency.

The official market, which then raised the dollar rate to near realistic levels of about 2.16 from the previous 1.35 pounds, has largely kept black market dealers at bay.

"Black market dealers had not totally disappeared. But the difference between the official and the free rates remained unchanged at about six per cent," another banker said.

But the downhill trend started in February with rumours that

Prominent Soviet writer predicts '89 the worst year for economy

MOSCOW (Agencies) — A prominent journalist told hard-pressed consumers Thursday that the Soviet Union is facing its toughest year yet and could degenerate into "economic chaos" without urgent reforms.

"The bony hand of hunger for products is quite capable of strangling perestroika," the Soviet programme of economic restructuring, Vasily Selyunin wrote in a front-page article in the daily Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya.

By putting off painful reforms, government economists are ruining the chances for those reforms to succeed, said Selyunin, a writer who specialises in economic affairs.

He cited the need to deal urgently with the Soviet budget deficit and shortages of consumer goods. Selyunin's calls for more rapid economic change previously have appeared in the Soviet Union's top journals.

The sooner real reform is introduced the better, he wrote. "Because otherwise we'll have to be introducing economic reform under the conditions of economic chaos."

The government could have begun raising prices on plentiful, easily substituted items, but now it is too late because virtually everything is in short supply, he said.

Today we have to choose between only two realities: Either relatively stable prices with minor inflation of about six per cent and empty shelves, or quickly rising prices and goods in the stores," he said.

Selyunin's prescriptions for fixing the economy included cuts in military spending, which he

placed at nearly 20 per cent of national income, and two or three years of importing giant stocks of goods from the West.

The imports could be sold at 10 times their cost and thus both help to balance the state budget and satisfy consumer demand, Selyunin proposed.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and other Kremlin leaders have said they oppose such massive imports, preferring to spend money on modernising Soviet industry instead.

Parliamentarian urges more radical reform

Meanwhile agricultural economist Vladimir Ilkhonov, a new member of the Soviet parliament, says farm reforms adopted last month did not go far enough to produce the agrarian revolution he feels his country needs.

He told Reuters in an interview in London that an election last week for the new Soviet parliament had strengthened the hand of reformers pushing for more radical measures in agriculture.

"This is the defeat of the party apparatus," he said of the voting, in which dozens of party bureaucrats were defeated and a bloc of progressives was elected.

Ilkhonov, who frequently comments in the Soviet press about why farming policy is going wrong and the harm collectivisation did to the country, was elected by the Academy of Agricultural Sciences to one of the parliamentary seats reserved for professional organisations.

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Japan calls on foreign companies to propose overseas aid projects

TOKYO (R) — Japan, the world's biggest aid donor, cannot find enough good projects in poor countries to spend its money on and wants companies in the developed world to propose ideas that Japan can finance.

Azusa Hayashi, director of the foreign ministry's loan aid division, told reporters Thursday that Japanese construction and trading firms were losing interest in aid-financed projects in developing countries.

"The domestic economy is in

good shape and there are lots of projects and jobs in Japan, so they don't have to go abroad," Hayashi said.

He said most developing countries lacked the ability to formulate good development project ideas and Japanese aid officials had traditionally relied heavily on private companies to propose projects.

"I request the cooperation of Japanese companies and of U.S. and European companies. If they have a good project, bring it to

Japan and let us know," Hayashi said.

In the 1988 financial year ending March 31, Japan's total overseas development aid payments, including debt rescheduling assistance, amounted to 1.145 trillion yen (\$8.67 billion), an increase of 59 per cent over the previous year.

Hayashi said the increase was largely a result of larger debt rescheduling loans to developing countries including Indonesia and China.

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WORLD STOCK MARKETS

SYDNEY — A sell-off in industrial stocks took the All Ordinaries index 11.6 points lower to 1,412.9. "Investors were probably more interested in the weather outlook for the weekend," said one broker.

TOKYO — Prices ended with a moderate gain in light turnover ahead of the weekend and U.S. jobs data. Individual bargain-hunting for incentive-backed issues propped the market up on an otherwise dull day. The Nikkei index rose 189.27 to 33,185.05.

HONG KONG — Stocks advanced slightly on scattered buying in thin trading. The Hang Seng index rose 8.58 to 3,024.09.

SINGAPORE — Prices were generally down but closed above the day's lows on selective buying in active trading. The Straits Times industrial index fell 5.77 to 1,186.66.

BOMBAY — Share prices shrugged off end-of-account considerations to rally on heavy speculative buying. Demand was sparked by rumours that the government would announce personal tax breaks and concessions to industry before the 1989/90 budget is passed by parliament next month.

FRANKFURT — Shares closed mixed to higher in moderately active trading, dominated by strong demand for selected specialty stocks. The DAX index rose 2.52 to 1,348.02.

ZURICH — Prices closed little changed in quiet trading after recovering from profit-taking centred on industrial shares. The all-share index eased 0.7 to 1,018.

PARIS — Prices ended an uncertain session lower after mixed signals from U.S. March employment data fuelled caution about the short-term global outlook for stocks.

LONDON — Shares were weak but off their lows in mid-afternoon after Wall Street reversed initial declines triggered by the jobs data. At 1451 GMT the FTSE index was down 10.7 at 2,041.8.

NEW YORK — Stocks were moderately higher in mid-morning, bouncing back from a lower start. Analysts said the jobs data showed the economy was slowing but perhaps not enough to alleviate inflation fears. The Dow was up four at 2,296.

Hershiser unbroken run ends with a run

CINCINNATI (AP) — The Orel Hershiser just 18 pitches into the 1989 season.

By then, Orel Hershiser had given up two hits, walked a batter, made a throwing error and allowed a run that ended his record shutout streak at 59.

"Those kind of things didn't happen last year," he said after Cincinnati beat him and the Los Angeles Dodgers 4-3 Wednesday night. "You have to be ready for your moment, but you need the probabilities of baseball on your side, too."

Last season, the mortal-looking man with gold-rimmed glasses, scrawny chest and pale skin looked like one of the immortals. A year ago to the day, he opened the season with a shutout against San Francisco and by the end, the Hershiser era looked great and so did his E.R.A.

But baseball has a way of evening out and things change.

Hershiser, once a 17th-round draft pick, is now the highest-paid player in baseball, the first \$3-million man. That prompted a practical-joking teammate this spring to draw lines through Hershiser's "55" jersey, turning the numbers into dollar signs.

He no longer carries his much-publicized computer on the road. He got too much kidding from everyone about it, and now waits to return home to enter his pitching secrets into the information

bank. He is no longer compared to his contemporaries, men like Gooden, Clemens and Viola. He is now compared to the greats of the game, guys like Koufax, Mathewson and Young.

In the locker room earlier Wednesday, Hershiser passed out copies of his book "Out of the Blue." Then, in the first inning against Cincinnati, his magic disappeared the same way.

Barry Larkin led off the season against Hershiser with a single up the middle and later scored on a single to right field by Todd Benzinger.

"Larkin's ball last year is probably right at Alfredo (shortstop Griffin). Instead, it's over my head," Hershiser said. "During the streak, I get Benzinger out."

Hershiser made two throwing errors and gave up four runs, two of them earned, in seven innings.

Hershiser knew it wouldn't last forever. In his mind, the streak ended last season, even before the playoff and world series heroics.

"I've given up a lot of runs since then," he said. "So I wasn't even thinking about it."

Paul O'Neill, 4-for-4 on opening day, came to the plate and Hershiser got him easily on a grounder back to the mound.

The Reds' lineup, batting .323 lifetime against Hershiser, got seven hits.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Professionals get go ahead for Barcelona Olympics

MUNICH, West Germany (R) — Professionals from the National Basketball Association (NBA) in the United States have been given the go ahead to compete in the Olympics and other international championships for the first time. The sport's governing body, the International Basketball Federation (FIBA), voted at a meeting Friday to drop a rule allowing only amateur players to take part in major international events, FIBA official Elizabeth Hutary said. The new ruling, which comes into effect immediately, opens the door for the NBA's top American and European players to represent their countries in the Olympics.

McEnroe Davis Cup favourite

SAN DIEGO (R) — John McEnroe is the strong favourite against Yannick Noah in the first World Group Davis Cup match Friday between the United States and France. McEnroe, with 37 victories, has won more singles Davis Cup matches than any other U.S. player, and in combined singles and doubles play, the New Yorker has a 52-9 record — the best of any American. In addition to those favourable statistics, McEnroe holds a 3-0 lead in career victories over Noah. "We mustn't want to come here to look good," Noah said. "We want to win and to do that I'll have to beat John. I have nothing to lose playing John," said Noah, ranked 12th in the world. "I will give everything I have."

Umpires protest to ITTF over team final

DORTMUND, West Germany (R) — Angry umpires at the World Table Tennis Championships protested to the sport's governing body Thursday about a controversial decision to over-ride officials at the men's team final. West German umpire Fritz Egler, who took charge of Tuesday's final between Sweden and China, was replaced in the fourth rubber when singles champion Jiang Jialiang complained about a decision. Jiang threw a tantrum and refused to play on against Jan-Ove Waldner after being penalised a point for a faulty serve. The Chinese star demanded a new umpire but the tournament referee ordered him to play on or forfeit the match. After frantic consultations, International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) officials over-ruled the tournament referee and replaced Egler, while saying that they stood by the umpire's decision against Jiang.

New York attorney general to appeal Cup

NEW YORK (AP) — New York State Attorney General Robert Abrams has decided to appeal a judge's order to forfeit the America's Cup to New Zealand, his office said Thursday. Spokesman for Abrams said a decision has been made to appeal, but when the actual documents will be filed is uncertain because the judge's order has not been approved yet by all the parties involved. "We find the decision to be faulty and we have informed officials in San Diego that we will appeal," said a spokesman for Abrams, Tim Gilles. "We have felt that New Zealand from the beginning was unsportsmanlike and terribly disruptive," Gilles said.

Over 1,100 athletes failed drug tests in 1988

COLOGNE, West Germany (R) — International Olympic committee (IOC) figures show that more than 1,100 athletes tested positive for banned substances in 1988, a leading doping tester said Thursday.

Forecast for Saturday, April 8, 1989

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

— As Charted By The Carroll Ringer Astrological Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Personal decisions are met with mixed reactions. Many, with travel on their mind, may get better results with short trips. Romantic fires glow toward the evening hours. **ARIES** (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19): There is an element of luck tied to most things that you do today. Check on a legal document that must be completed. **Taurus** (Apr. 20 to May 20): Part of this day may be spent waiting for others to get their act together. You learn of spiritual values from another devotee. **GEMINI** (May 21 to June 21): Financial adjustments are needed to make the budget work. Build on your ideas for profit and gain. Have confidence in your abilities. **MOON CHILDREN** (June 22 to Jul. 21): Money problems can sink the ship if you don't plug up the leaks. Adjust credit plans. Reduce outflow wherever possible. **LEO** (Jul. 22 to Aug. 23): Focus on security and building true self-confidence. Social friends can be a crutch to lean on. Career potential is grinding in your favor. **VIRGO** (Aug. 24 to Sept. 22): Take charge of your own future. You are a self-starter and can reach your goals. Your career performance is highly rated by the competition. **LIBRA** (Sept. 23 to Oct. 23): Take advantage of your opportunity to build profits. Your inner feelings are aglow with insight and sincerity. The element of luck is with you. **SCORPIO** (Oct. 24 to Nov. 21): You meet a strong-willed individual who can help you. A romantic flare-up can have you wondering where you stand. **SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Your popularity is at a high point. An individual shares a secret. Stay neutral when kinky people pursue questionable goals. **CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20): A problem can be solved by digging down into protected inner feelings that feed the emotions. Understanding yourself will win. **AQUARIUS** (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19): Someone may be withholding information that you need. A member of the opposite sex shows you how much he or she cares. **PISCES** (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20): You have been trying to ignore a problem in the hope that it will evaporate. Take firm action while you can still control the matter.

THE Daily Crossword by Hank Harrington

ACROSS

- Author Waugh
- Dallas
- Isa
- Timber wolf
- Solo
- Outdoor show
- Come home to roost
- Similar
- Progressive movements
- Light
- Canals
- Timetable abbr.
- Enjoy
- Newspaper
- Cryptographer
- mode
- Forepart of a ship
- Show pleasure
- Dye
- Smart
- Balanced
- Madden
- Spanks
- Chemical ending
- Let go
- Woodworker's tool
- Fall flowers
- Social affair
- Child
- Characteristic
- Aromatic herb
- Ryan or
- Taken
- Basketball plays
- Indian system
- Pub pint
- A Reises
- For scars
- Second of two
- Grains
- Graftad: Her.

DOWN

- Priestly vestments
- Booby
- Oil-yielding tree
- Force
- Long-nosed fish
- Verbal
- Canary
- Spok
- Plays
- Swiss river
- Sub
- "A" clock
- lity
- Bar legally
- Pub pint
- Makes public
- A portion
- Mongol
- Skirt shape
- Dacca's land
- Period
- His Verbage
- Make whole again
- Comedian
- River to the North Sea
- Collar
- Punkie
- Gutter Sam
- Ind. weight
- Pencil end
- Black Sea
- Dined
- Balmy
- Med. subj
- Saga
- Privy to
- Card game
- Being
- Dined
- Parents

British love of losers hampers champion O'Reilly

SOLIHULL, England (AP) — Speed skater Wilf O'Reilly steps out on his home ice rink Friday seeking the same acclaim as a winner that ski-jumping countryman Eddie Edwards received for being a loser at the Calgary Olympics.

The 24-year-old Briton is favoured to win the overall men's title in the world short-track speed skating championships.

It is a sport that caught the public's imagination in Calgary where it was a demonstration event. But it paled in comparison to the publicity that followed Edwards, nicknamed "Eddie the Eagle," who finished last in the two ski jump events.

"This must be the only country in the world which treats its champions in this way," O'Reilly said on the eve of the championships. "I took Olympic gold in what was, admittedly, only a demonstration event. But Eddie Edwards ended up with all the glory and attention — for finishing last."

O'Reilly will have to race 15 times if he is to win the individual, overall and relay gold medals.

He has already claimed seven British titles, two European championships and the most prestigious of them all, the Olympic crown.

The sport remains a mystery to most Britons, but has enjoyed increased popularity throughout the rest of the world.

World Table Tennis Championships

No.2 crashes to unknown

DORTMUND, West Germany (R) — China's Olympic silver medalist Li Huiwen crashed out of the world championships Thursday, beaten in her first singles match by little-known North Korean An Hui-Suk.

Two of Sweden's world title winning men had to struggle in their first-round singles matches. European champion Mikael Appelgren needed five games to overcome former Irish champion Colum Sleivn and Erik Lindh dropped a game against North Korea's Hong Sun-Il.

Li, who had been seeded to meet team-mate and Olympic champion Chen Jing in the women's final, put up little resistance as An won 22-20, 21-13, 21-15 in the second round meeting.

Like all the top 16 women's seeds Li, who looked in sparkling form when she helped China to

team victory earlier in the championships, had been given a first-round bye.

Appelgren, ranked ninth in the world, took two hours to subdue Sleivn who plays in the West German third division.

"I certainly didn't underestimate Sleivn whom I had played once before," said Appelgren who lost the first two games. "I knew about his aggressive style which I don't like very much."

Lindh, the Olympic bronze medalist, was the least consistent Swede in the team event and looked below par again Thursday when he struggled to defeat Hong, ranked 126th in the world, 21-12, 21-13, 21-23, 21-12.

Defending world champion Jiang Jialiang of China treated his first-round tie against Australian Glen Tepper as little more than a confidence-boosting exercise af-

ter the shock of suffering defeat with his compatriots in the team final.

Jiang, who plans to retire after trying to win the title for a third time, raced through his first-round match to win 21-9, 21-8, 21-15.

The women's seedings list looked severely depleted with both West German Olga Nemes, the European top 12 champion, and North Korea's Cho Jong-Hui joining Li on the casualty list.

Nemes, who had been seeded to play in the deciding fifth quarter-finals, saved three match points in the deciding fifth game against England's Alison Gordon before losing.

"This is the best win of my career," said Gordon, the English number one. "I actually played the wrong type of game but it seemed to pay off."

Taiwan to compete in China

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — Taiwan and China signed an agreement to permit Taiwanese athletes to compete in sports championships in China for the first time in four decades, a Taiwanese sports official reported Friday.

Chang Feng-Hsu, chairman of the Taiwan Olympic Committee, told a press conference the agreement was signed in Hong Kong Thursday following a series of secret negotiations in the British colony that began in February.

He said both sides agreed to withhold announcement of the agreement until Friday. Officials said the agreement would permit Taiwan to send a

team to compete in the Asian junior gymnastics championship which begins in Beijing April 21.

Taiwan also plans to compete in next year's Asian games in Beijing and 10 other international sports competitions in China later this year, officials said.

Chang said the agreement would allow athletes from Taiwan to compete under the name "Chungwa (Chinese) Taipei."

He said the Chinese originally wanted Taiwan to compete under the name "Zhongkuo (China) Taipei," but Taiwan objected because this would have suggested that Taiwan was a local government under China.

Lee Ching-Hwa, Secretary General of the Taiwan Olympic Committee who signed the agreement for Taiwan, told newsmen, "we insisted on a non-political name designation. Our participation (in the sports meets in China) was made possible because the (Chinese) officials treated the matter with a practical and reasonable attitude."

Ho Zhenliang, deputy chairman of China's Olympic Committee, signed the agreement for China. Chang said the mainland Chinese also withdrew an earlier demand for their teams to compete in sports meets in Taiwan.

National Hockey League semi-finals

NEW YORK (AP) — Brian Propp's second goal of the game with 51 seconds left in regulation capped Philadelphia's three-goal third-period comeback and gave the Flyers a 3-2 victory over the Washington Capitals, evening the Patrick division series at one game apiece.

With Washington's Dale Hunter off for slashing goalie Ron Hextall, Tim Kerr's shot from the lower left circle hit Propp and deflected past goaltender Pete Peeters. It was Propp's third goal in two games.

Propp had tied the score with 8:35 remaining when he tipped Gold Murphy's shot from the right goalpost past Peeters for a power-play goal.

Washington opened the scoring on a power-play goal that went in off the skate of Dino Ciccarelli in time expired in the second period. The green light went on and the clock went to zero, but referee Roh Shick allowed the goal.

Courtland gave Washington a 2-0 lead 2:40 into the final period before Keith Acton scored on a rebound for Philadelphia.

In other league games Thursday, Pittsburgh beat New York 7-4, Montreal defeated Hartford 3-2, Boston beat Buffalo 5-3, Calgary defeated Vancouver 5-2, St. Louis beat Minnesota 4-3, Chicago beat Detroit 5-4 and Los Angeles beat the Oilers 5-2.

Penguins 7, Rangers 4

Kevin Stevens, Rob Brown and Jock Callender scored in a 91-second span to spark a five-goal first period for Pittsburgh, which grabbed a 2-0 lead in a playoff series for only the fourth time in its history. The Penguins, in their first playoff since 1982, won 3-1 in game 1.

NHL scoring leader Mario Lemieux, who had been held to one assist in the first two games after finishing the regular season with 199 points, scored his first-ever playoff goal into an empty net with 1:06 remaining.

Canadians 3, Whalers 2

Bobby Smith's power-play goal highlighted a three-goal outburst in the second period for Montreal, which leads the Adams Division series 2-0. Montreal also won 6-2 Wednesday night.

Montreal was on a power-play when Peter Svoboda's point shot was blocked at the defence, picked up by Mats Naslund in the slot and fed across to Smith at the side of the crease. He slapped it past goaltender Peter Sidorkiewicz at 17:02 of the period.

Bruins 5, Sabres 3

Craig Janney and Bobby Carpenter scored 48 seconds apart early in the third period as the Bruins overcame a 3-0 deficit and evened their Adams Division series at 1-1.

Janney tied the game 68 seconds into the final period after John Carter's 20-foot shot from the left circle hit the right goalpost. The puck bounced to Janney in the slot and he beat goaltender Clint Malarchuk with a 10-foot shot.

Carpenter's go-ahead goal came on a power play at 1:56 when Malarchuk, starting his first game since suffering a severe neck wound March 22, stopped a shot but dropped the puck. Carpenter connected on a short shot to put the Bruins ahead

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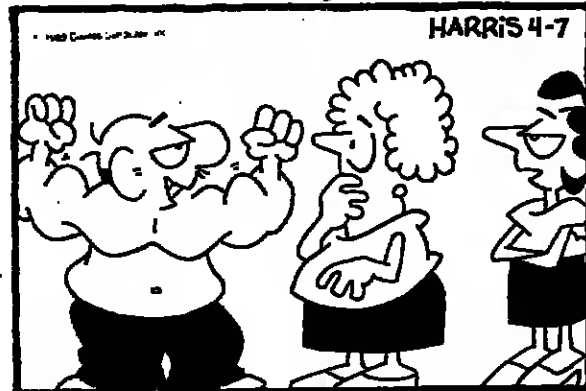
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By Harris



"Don't be too impressed with his muscles. He made them out of Silly Putty."

JUMBLE.

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

TAUCE

MEZIA

INZIAN

DRUTSY



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

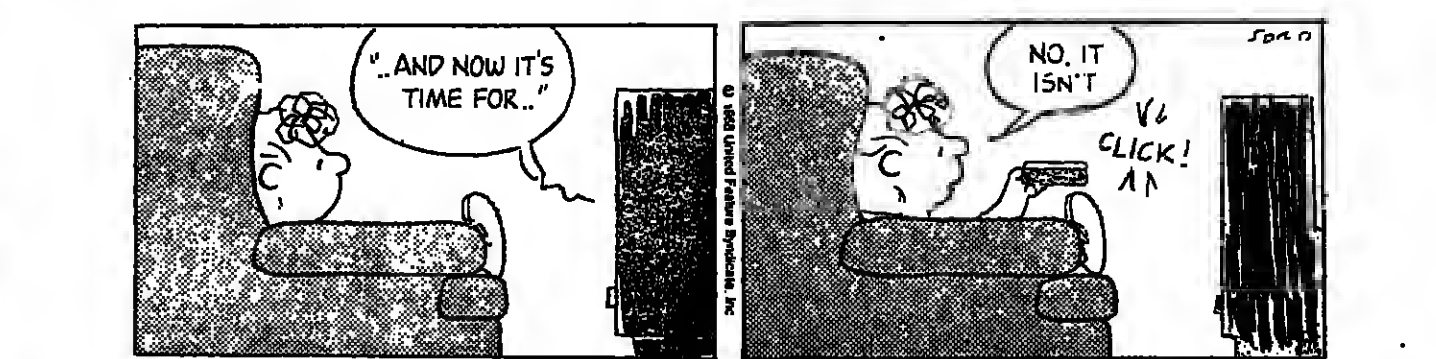
Answer here: "O O O O - O O O O"

(Answers Monday)

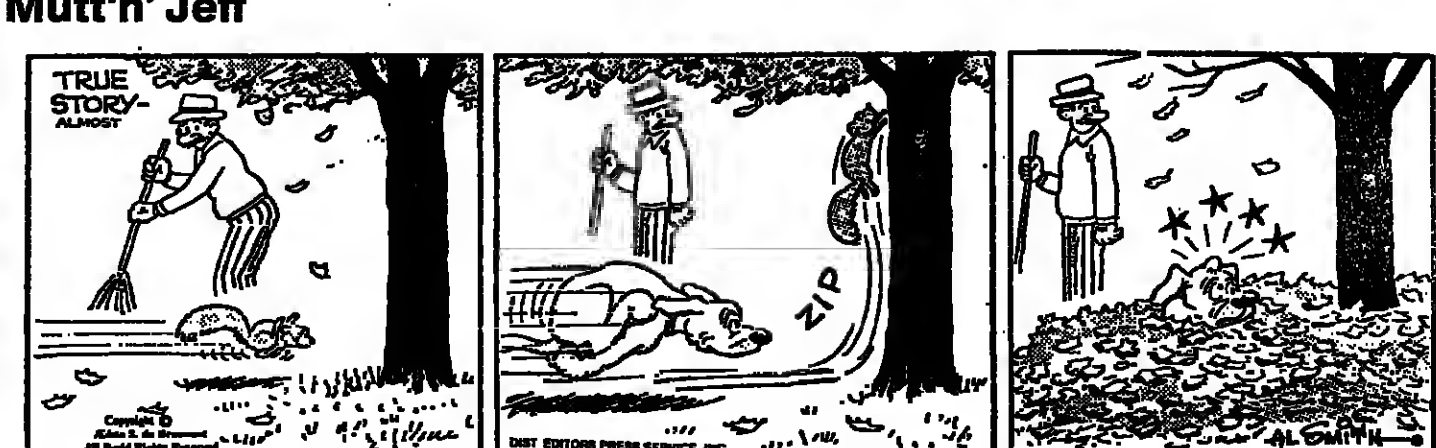
Yesterday's Jumble: LATHE CHALK HAZARD WALNUT

Answer: Needs to know your zodiacal sign before she tells you this—WHAT YOU WANT TO HEAR

Peanuts



Mutt'n' Jeff



Andy Capp





VICTIMS OF DEVASTATING FAMINE

— Hungry children queue for food in Quelimane, Mozambique, which is host to thousands of refugees from rebel activities against the government. Mozambican Deputy Health Minister Jose Igreja Campos said Thursday that an average of 128 people were dying every day in remote areas of the country.

"The number is so great that there must be hundreds of thousands of people affected by hunger," he said, quoting information just received from the area.

Thousands of displaced people are in reception centres in two districts, which were held until last year by right-wing rebels of the Mozambican National Resistance (MNR).

The minister said security problems were

hampering efforts to fly food into the area. He doubted whether planes could carry the quantity of food required and described the situation as extremely serious.

The Health Ministry said 3,800 people, mainly children, died in a measles outbreak in Gile district in January and February.

A government team will fly to Zambezia to evaluate the needs in the area.

The government, helped by the United Nations and scores of voluntary agencies, has a nationwide emergency relief programme but it has difficulty in reaching remote areas because of lack of roads, vehicles, planes and airstrips.

The MNR regularly attacks relief convoys in search of food.

Battles rage in Namibia

OSHAKATI, Namibia (R) — Fighting between Namibian nationalist fighters and South African-led forces intensified and spread along the border with Angola as battles raged into their seventh day, security sources said Friday.

Spokesmen in this garrison town said the battle zone now stretched across more than 400 kilometres of road bush land along Namibia's northern border. The past 24 hours saw some of the bloodiest clashes since the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) began its bush war against South African rule in the territory 23 years ago, according to security forces.

Namibian police put the latest SWAPO death toll at 259, while 24 policemen and two soldiers were killed.

SWAPO said Thursday it had lost fewer than 40 fighters and put security force deaths much higher.

Chief Inspector Derek Brune of the Namibian police said civilians had told security forces the resistance fighters would not stop fighting "until everything is finished."

More corpses were brought in Friday to the mortuary at Oshakati, already piled high with war-mutilated bodies. Civilians said slain fighters were being left to rot in the sun, sometimes for days.

"It is our policy to bring any bodies from the fighting to Oshakati for a proper post mortem," Brune told a press briefing. "But in these circumstances we have just not been able to muster the forces to do this as all our men are out."

Botha in Windhoek

South African Foreign Minister P. W. Botha arrived in Windhoek Friday for talks on ending the bush warfare.

Botha, accompanied by Defence Minister Magnus Malan and a 10-man team of officials, flew in to Windhoek and told reporters: "We have just landed,

we are going to start talking now. I cannot say beforehand what will be achieved."

Asked if he would stick to a South African ultimatum for SWAPO fighters to lay down their arms by Saturday or be hunted down mercilessly, Botha shrugged and said: "That box must be unlocked."

The fighting broke out April 1, the day a U.N. peace and independence plan came into operation in Namibia, had risen sharply in the past 24 hours.

Directly after landing the South African delegation headed for emergency talks with Finsila diplomat Martti Ahtisaari, head of the U.N. peacekeeping mission, whose plans have been thrown into chaos by the fighting.

South Africa, in an account which has been generally accepted, says the clashes began after SWAPO tried to infiltrate 1,500 fighters across the border from Angola.

SWAPO maintains that its fighters did not cross the Angolan frontier but were already inside Namibia.

It says they were attacked by

Namibian security forces while preparing to hand themselves over to U.N. peacekeeping forces.

The U.N., itself under heavy fire for not having all of its forces in place in Namibia April 1, has said in its initial inquiry into the violence that there was a SWAPO incursion from Angola.

Members of the Namibian police told reporters Friday four of their colleagues were killed Thursday in an ambush near Eenhana, 10 kilometres south of the Angolan border.

Four South African Impala jets screamed over the territory, strafing the ambush site and killing 17 fighters, South African government-radio reported Friday.

Brune said Thursday night that SWAPO infiltration into Namibia was continuing and the fighters were armed with mortars, ground-to-air missiles, anti-tank rockets and at least one heavy cannon.

Another clash Thursday, one of the most severe, claimed 34 SWAPO lives, police spokesman Kierle du Rand said in Windhoek.

COLUMN

Imelda to keep Marcos forever

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — The wife of ousted Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos plans to entomb her ailing husband upon his death and keep his body on display in Hawaii until she can scatter his ashes over the Philippines to "fertilise his country," a Manila newspaper reported Tuesday. "Not only will it be a political statement. It will be a spectacle — an international spectacle to have Marcos (lie in state) here," Imelda Marcos told the Businessworld in an interview at the Marcoses' Honolulu home over the weekend. "I'll keep Marcos here until 1992. Then I'll bring him home," said Mrs. Marcos, referring to the year when president Corason Aquino's current six-year term ends and a new presidential election is held in the Philippines.

More funds for Habitat

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Former President Jimmy Carter and country singer Willie Nelson appeared at a fund-raiser for Habitat for Humanity, the home-building project Carter has been involved with since he left the White House. Carter said building homes for the poor is a concrete example of religious faith. "Habitat gives us a chance to put our religious faith into practice more than anything I have ever seen, and to break down the chasm that sometimes exists between fortunate people like us on the one hand and people who have never had a decent home on the other," Carter told reporters before going to a \$100-a-ticket reception. Habitat for Humanity is an ecumenical organisation that builds homes and sells them to low-income families at no profit.

\$550,000 raised for AIDS research

MIAMI (AP) — With Sophia Loren as the guest of honour, about 750 people attended a dinner and musical extravaganza that raised an estimated \$550,000 to house an AIDS research programme. Melanie Griffith, star of the movie Working Girl, and her mother, Tippi Hedren, were hosts of "an extraordinary evening" on Williams Island, where Loren has a home. Actors Anthony Perkins, Cliff Robertson and Robert Goulet were among about 50 celebrities attending. Organisers said proceeds will go toward building a \$5-million facility of the University of Miami's comprehensive AIDS programme. Dr. Margaret Fischl, the university's AIDS programme director, praised Ms. Loren for helping fight stigma and apathy toward acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

Stars honour Spielberg

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Hollywood stars turned out by the hundreds to honour director Steven Spielberg at a gala to raise money to build the American Cinematheque Arts Complex. Faye Dunaway, Victoria Principal, John Travolta, Goldie Hawn, Tim Matheson and directors Barry Levinson and Sydney Pollack joined studio executives, agents and publicists at the fourth annual Moving Picture Ball at the Century Plaza Hotel. "Steven Spielberg has truly put the heart back into film and the audiences back into theatres," said Gary Essert, Cinematheque founder and artistic director. The Cinematheque, a non-profit, viewer-sponsored cultural organisation, is building an arts complex of theatres and galleries next door to Mann's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood. Proceeds from the fund-raiser were not announced.

The weather at major world capitals & cities

	MIN.	MAX.	Weather
AMSTERDAM	14	20	45 Rain
ATHENS	14	23	73 Clear
BAIRN	17	24	75 Clear
BANGKOK	28	37	90 Clear
Buenos Aires	17	26	73 Clear
CAIRO	13	35	91 Clear
CHICAGO	01	24	48 Snow
COPENHAGEN	02	27	45 Clear
FRANKFURT	02	21	53 Cloudy
GENEVA	05	21	52 Cloudy
HONG KONG	19	26	68 Rain
ISTANBUL	16	21	72 Clear
LONDON	05	11	52 Clear
LOS ANGELES	22	32	41 Clear
MADRID	09	37	95 Cloudy
MECCA	M	M	M
MIAMI	19	26	80 Clear
MONTREAL	41	55	07 Cloudy
MOSCOW	12	27	45 Clear
NEW DELHI	15	28	82 Clear
NEW YORK	07	15	62 Cloudy
PARIS	M	M	M
ROME	08	15	59 Clear
TOKYO	10	20	68 Clear
VIENNA	07	16	61 Clear

M - Indicates missing information.

Avril soldiers kill four rebels as sporadic fighting continues

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)

— Soldiers loyal to Haitian leader Lieutenant General Prosper Avril chased rebel soldiers into a house and destroyed it with cannon fire Thursday night, killing four and wounding one, a witness said.

Earlier, the U.S. ambassador visited Avril and told him the United States backed his attempt to quell the military uprising that began with a failed coup Sunday, U.S. officials said.

Soldiers of the presidential guard in an armoured car chased a truck carrying members of the elite Leopards commando unit on Delmas road, across town from the presidential palace, the witness said on condition of anonymity.

Throughout the day, the mutinous Leopards had been riding up and down the road, shooting in the air. The witness said the Leopards who were shot had stolen the truck shortly after curfew began at 7 p.m. (2300 GMT) and ran into the house when they saw the presidential guards approaching.

After the Leopards were killed, other Leopards attacked the armoured car with bazookas near the office of the state television, the witness said. The outcome of the battle was not known, but the TV stopped broadcasting shortly thereafter.

The four killings, which were not confirmed, brought to eight the number of Leopards killed since a coup attempt against Avril Sunday failed. The deep divisions in the military were seen as a sign that more disorder may be imminent. Haitian soldiers rarely kill each other.

It was not known how many members of the 400-man Leopards unit were involved in the mutiny. Also rebelling are members of the 700-man Dessalines barracks, the most repressive unit in Haiti's 7,000-man army.

The rebels were in a standoff with Avril's 1,000-man presidential guard. The Dessalines barracks abuts the neo-classical national palace, fortified with anti-aircraft guns and cannons.

Opposition unites to oust Takeshita

TOKYO (R) — The leaders of Japan's four major opposition parties have formed a united front to drive scandal-plagued Premier Noboru Takeshita from office, which political analysts say, is an increasingly likely possibility.

The Public Broadcasting Network NHK reported Friday that the leaders of the Socialist Party, the Clean Government Party, the Democratic Socialist Party and the Social Democratic Federation had decided to jointly press for Takeshita's ouster and a general election.

The four leaders met for the first time more than two years as a result of a common perception that now is the most dynamic period in Japanese politics since the end of World War II.

Political analysts said, after a week of damaging revelations, that it looked increasingly likely that Takeshita would be forced to resign.

Major Japanese newspapers Friday reported that the prime minister had received a further 25 million yen (\$190,000) from the Recruit Company, the enterprise at the heart of the scandal.

Earlier in the week an aide admitted Takeshita's political support group had received 30 million yen (\$275,000) in May, 1987, from the publishing and telecommunications group accused of trying to buy business and political favours.

This was in addition to the 20 million yen (\$155,000) Takeshita had already admitted receiving as a donation from Recruit.

Analysts say a large group within the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) now see dumping Takeshita as the only way the party can avoid a blood-bath in future elections.

Three cabinet ministers have been forced to resign in connection with the Recruit scandal and 13 businessmen and senior civil



Noboru Takeshita

servants have been arrested.

"The pressure is building up within the LDP," said Tokyo University Professor Takashi Inoguchi.

"There is a growing feeling in the party that with Takeshita as prime minister they will suffer a severe setback in any election which comes along," he said.

North takes the stand

WASHINGTON (AP) — Oliver North, taking the stand for the first time in his Iran-contra trial, has testified he merely followed orders during the time the U.S. government secretly sold arms to Iran and diverted funds to Nicaraguan rebels.

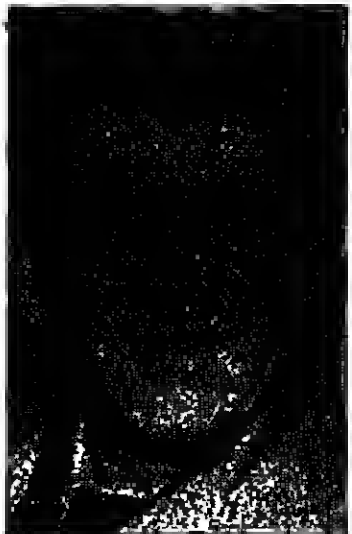
At one point during his testimony Thursday, the ex-White House aide was asked by his attorney if then-President Ronald Reagan had designated him to help the Nicaraguan rebels, also known as contras.

But North was stopped before he could answer the question when prosecution lawyers objected and the judge sustained the objection.

Asked who told him to give secret assistance to the rebels, North named former National Security adviser Robert McFarlane, McFarlane's then-deputy, John Poindexter and the late Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director William Casey.

Earlier Thursday, North's lawyers read the jury a lengthy statement that said George Bush had played a role as intermediary in Reagan's secret effort to aid the Nicaraguan rebels after Congress banned official U.S. help.

The jury heard that Bush, then vice president, personally told the Honduran president in 1985 that extra aid was being funnelled to his country. In earlier testimony, McFarlane has said that the aid was part of a secret agreement



Oliver North

calling for Honduras to help the contras.

At the White House, Press Secretary Martin Fitzwater said, "We can't say anything. It would become a part of the case."

North faces 12 felony charges.

During the seventh week of his trial, he testified that he had been ordered by his superiors to keep silent about his role in keeping the rebels going after the cutoff of official aid.

"I was told not to tell anybody," North said. "I was particularly admonished" to keep secret "that another country was providing millions of dollars to help the contras."

North described himself as an orders-obeying marine who had planned to return to Camp Lejeune to command a battalion when top officials in the Reagan administration enlisted him to run the secret contra operation in 1984.

'Cold fusion' details made public

AMSTERDAM (Agencies) — A prestigious scientific magazine Thursday published two scientists' first detailed account of the "cold fusion" experiment which they say could provide a key to low-cost nuclear energy.

Martin Fleischmann and Stanley Pons stunned scientists last month by saying they had achieved nuclear fusion at room temperature using ordinary laboratory equipment.

In their eight-page article for the Journal of Electroanalytical Chemistry and Interfacial Electrochemistry, they wrote: "We realise that the results reported here raise more questions than they provide answers."

They added: "They most surprising feature of our results is ... that the bulk of the energy result is due to a hitherto unknown nuclear process or processes."

The journal released early copies of its April 10 issue with

the report by Fleischmann, of Britain's Southampton University, and Pons, head of the University of Utah's chemistry department.

They describe five variations of their experiment, using various sizes of palladium rods and plates in heavy water at 300 degrees Kelvin (27 degrees centigrade or 81 degrees Fahrenheit).

They ran an electric current through the palladium which was in a solution of heavy water and the lithium compound iodide. The palladium absorbed so much deuterium from the decomposing heavy water that the atoms of the metal began to fuse.

"It is inconceivable that this could be due to anything but nuclear processes," they wrote.

When they tried using a one centimetre cube (0.06 of a cubic inch) of palladium, a substantial part of the metal fused, some of it

vapourised and part of the cup-bournd housing the experiment was destroyed.

"We urge the use of extreme caution in such experiments. A possible interpretation ... is in terms of ignition," they wrote.

Their results showed that the larger the rod of palladium, the more energy was generated. The largest rod was 2.5 centimetre (One inch) long with a diameter of 0.4 centimetre (one-sixth of an inch).

Until now nuclear fusion has been achieved only at a temperature close to that of the sun or in atom bombs.

Twenty scientists from the Dutch Foundation for the Fundamental Research of matter said after reading the article that it contained important information for basic research but was unlikely to provide a quick, cheap source of energy.

Fizzled experiment

At least one independent attempt to produce nuclear fusion in a jar of water has fizzled so far, diminishing hopes raised two weeks ago of an amazing and limitless source of power.

"We are very sceptical," said Chemist Mark S. Wrighton of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. "We've done the experiment now for 10 days, and we don't see anything exceptional."

Wrighton began his experiment March 27, four days after Fleischmann and Pons announced their results. However, Wrighton said his work does not conclusively prove their approach is worthwhile.

"If nuclear fusion occurs, it is at a very low level and our detectors aren't sensitive enough, or it takes longer than 10 days, or it doesn't work," Wrighton said.

Japanese tourists cram crowded skies

By Karen Lowry Miller
Reuters

TOKYO — Japanese flocking overseas to sightsee, seek the sun and shop are helping cut Japan's contentious trade surplus, but packed-to-capacity airports are threatening to curb the boom.

A record 8.43 million Japanese travelled abroad in 1988, up 23 per cent from the year before, government figures show.

The growing strength of the yen since late 1985 spurred Japanese to travel abroad, making a hop overseas a status symbol but no longer a luxury.

Single working women in their 20s with few financial obligations — many of them clerical workers called "OL" for "office ladies" — make up

one of the largest groups of travellers freely spending abroad, travel agents say.

"The OL is doing more to cut the Japanese trade account surplus than all the politicians put together," said Kenneth Courtis, senior economist at DB Capital Markets (Asia).

In early March, the Finance Ministry reported a current account surplus of \$1.73 billion for January, unadjusted for inflation, down from a surplus of \$3.51 billion a year earlier.

Economists said tourist spending abroad during the new year holidays pushed the current account figure, which includes trade in services as well as goods, much lower than expected.

"Last year, overseas tours became cheaper than domestic tours," said Japan travel

bureau spokesman Natsuhiko Yashiro.

A five-day package tour to Guam runs to 90,000 yen (\$685) while a similar trip to Okinawa, Japan's southernmost island, averages closer to 110,000 yen (\$840), he said.

That's good news for helping redress trade imbalances. The Japan Travel Bureau estimates that Japanese tourists spend 350,000 yen (\$2,650) per trip beyond an average 200,000 yen (\$1,500) package tour.

The United States — especially Hawaii, California and the territory of Guam — is the most popular destination, followed by Taiwan and South Korea. Australia and Europe are gaining.

One 25-year-old magazine editor who went to Italy in January will go to Hong Kong

in April and Europe again in July. She said she always holds a return ticket to Hong Kong.

"I like to shop, but I've already bought most of what I want," said Junko Tomura. "Now I go abroad to eat good food and to walk through the streets to get to know the people."

But even if tourists have the yen, the skies have a limit.

Tokyo's main international airport is operating at full capacity and planned airports near Osaka and Nagoya are still several years from completion.

"The problem is, how are they going to fit all these people in," said Jim Doherty, transportation analyst for Jardine Fleming Securities.

On March 26, the Transportation Ministry boosted the

limit on daily arrivals and departures at Narita from 330 flights to 340.

"The airlines pushed the government to add slots because there are so many customers," a Narita official said.

But expansion plans, including a new terminal and two more runways, are being delayed by strong opposition from local residents, many of whom fought pitched battles with the police in a bid to stop the airport from being built in the first place.

"Until more capacity is made available at Narita, further expansion of service is impossible," said Geoffrey Tudor, spokesman for Japan Air Lines (JAL), Japan's main carrier.

Instead, JAL is juggling flights to match demand for

sightseeing in Europe and koala-bear watching in Australia.

Aviation authorities say they also aim to provide private charters from regional airfields.

Airline officials note that Japanese tend to cram their holidays into peak travel times, particularly national holidays at new year, early May and mid-August.

Yashiro said that for "Golden Week" in early May — a week of national holidays — demand is up 50 per cent over last year. All packages to all destinations have been booked since early February and waiting lists are long.

It was hoped that official prodding for people to take vacations to allay Western criticism that Japanese work too

hard would scatter travel times a little more evenly, a transport ministry official said.

Tourists still pack the buses for the two-hour ride to Narita airport around busy national holidays, and 58 per cent of Japanese overseas tourists still go for five or fewer days.

But they are becoming less rigid. "We may soon see a golden fortnight," Tudor said.

And while Japanese honeymooners still flock to Hawaii in group packages, the continued strength of the yen means that people who before only dreamed of travelling — parents with children and older couples — are lining up as well.

"It used to be easy to name the trend," said Yashiro. "Now, everybody is going everywhere."